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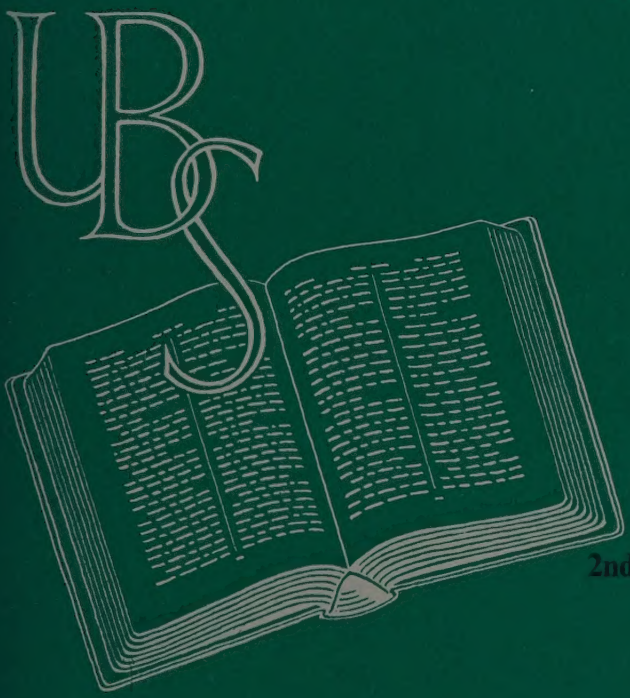

2nd Quarter
1957

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UNITED BIBLE SOCIETIES

BULLETIN

SECOND QUARTER - 1957

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LAST AUTUMN Dr. Platt and Dr. Holmgren each completed a round-the-world trip. The former went East ; the latter West. They met half-way, in Indonesia, for the U.B.S. meetings and for a conference with Bible Society secretaries in Asia. Dr. Platt's main purpose this time was an extended visit to the Bible Societies in Australia and New Zealand. In addition, he stopped briefly in Canada and in New York. Dr. Holmgren spent over half a year on a roving visit in all areas of Asia and Africa where work is being done under the auspices or with the help of the A.B.S. Both travellers met again in London shortly after Dr. Platt's return—the last stop for Dr. Holmgren on his way to New York.

These two colleagues have been good enough, in spite of their accumulated work, to sum up for the readers of the BULLETIN the overall view which they have gained from their many and various, but—as the reader will note—remarkably convergent impressions. In a few months time the U.B.S. Council will be meeting in Brazil, thus offering a further occasion to Bible Society leaders to examine the needs and challenge of the hour. The following reflections of Dr. Platt and Dr. Holmgren could not be more timely, as a means of preparing the minds of those who, on behalf of all Societies, will be consulting together on the best ways and means of meeting the requirements of the day. Unprecedented opportunities are arising ; new forces and resources are ready to be used in the work ; time may be short, and more ought to be done. The two travellers carry us along with them in their deep concern and in their sharp analysis of the present times and of the responsibilities which lie ahead.

It is with a similar wide range perspective that E. H. Robertson asks us, in his brief report, to regard Bible Society work in the world today. No subject is more topical than that of the place and use of the Bible in the life of the churches at the present time ; none has received less attention. There is a lot of talking and writing on the rediscovery of the Bible going on in all quarters. There has been little analysis and study of how this return to the Bible manifests itself and with what results. E. H. Robertson, who has so far only taken his first steps in that research, opens for us a few windows on the infinite scope of his study. He does not fail to make us realise how important in many respects the inquiry and promotion in which he is engaged can be for the future and growth of Bible Society work in the world.

O.B.

A World Wrestling till the Break of Day

William J. Platt

IN THE WHOLE BIBLE there is no story which better describes the world today than that of Jacob recounted in the Book of Genesis. For us it is a parable : Man wrestling with life only to discover that he is at grips with God. Struggling for freedom, security, economic development and with poverty, ignorance and sin, the cry is that of Jacob : " I will not let Thee go except Thou bless me." The Living God is speaking in our generation.

A World Half-sick of Shadows

The Afro-Asian nations represent two-thirds of our world. To take the view that the arch enemy against which they struggle is merely the colonialism of the West is unrealistic. They wrestle with life. The poverty of India and the inter-tribal feuds of Africa were there long before the Battle of Plassey or the Ashanti wars. The will-o'-the-wisp of illiterate religion has been the lot of the masses for centuries. The caste system of India was dictatorship as well as religion. The dire need for freedom, food and cohesive nationhood has not just appeared in the twentieth century—it existed long before Vasco de Gama rounded the Cape, or de Lesseps built the Suez Canal.

Nor did missionary penetration start from the West. Centuries before Christ Buddhism began to build an empire from India to the China Sea. From Senegal to Sumatra, Islam created a social framework for life—a thousand years before Carey set out for Serampore. And though these religions greatly affected Asia's life, she managed to assimilate them, to make room. Things new and old lived side by side. There was no revolution. From Dakar to Djakarta Animism remained basic.

Nationalism was not new either. The ancient folk-lore of many lands endowed their peoples with a sense of being "chosen" by their gods. Japan "was destined to rule the world". China was *Tien Hsia* and covered "all beneath the sky". African tribes believed in their own uniqueness and invincibility so long as they obeyed their *Vodun*. Religion and its philosophy, wedded the masses to a belief that life itself could be controlled—hence the association of primitive religion with magic and belief in an infallible formula. For millions that shadow-world was the mirror of life.

Now, the mirror has cracked from side to side, and like *The Lady of Shalott* they are "half-sick of shadows". "The whole world today", says Prof. Arnold Toynbee, "is in spiritual distress as a result of having lost touch with its ancestral religious traditions."

Spiritual Vacuum

An Indian student who has ceremoniously bathed in the Sacred Ganges is shown a microbe-laden drop of Ganges water under a microscope. He smashes the microscope to the ground. Like our world, he has arrived at the

parting of the ways. The invincibility of old Japan has been shattered by the *fact* of defeat in war, and as a logical consequence her Emperor can no longer be divine— "The greatest shock that any living people has yet had ; legend refuted by fact." "The three traditional faiths of Japan seem all to have lost their grip on Japanese minds and hearts." The African village girl away on the Copper Belt along with others of diverse tribes and tongues,—miles away from native soil and family religion,—commits the adultery for which her tribal law would have demanded death. "Seldom, if ever, has change struck at a continent so swiftly and with such little mercy," says Elspeth Huxley concerning Africa, and *The Manchester Guardian* asks : "What is to happen to a people which has lost one faith and not yet found another?" Solemnly the same journal adds "Mau Mau is one answer to that question."

Nature Abhors a Vacuum

Nor is the vacuum only spiritual. South East Asia (excepting Thailand) was once colonised by the West. All Africa (except Liberia and Ethiopia) was over-run by European politics and economics. So for generations Asia and Africa, whose life had been organised on traditional religio-political patterns—good and bad— leaned upon and learned from the European, and for generations peace and security reigned as once they did in Europe under the *Pax Romana*. The common man was no politician, and was content. The priest was subservient. The peasant tilled his fields. Christian penetration was meanwhile in a privileged position. Schools were opened. Education spread. Men's eyes slowly opened to a New World. But in 1896 Ethiopia by Western arms defeated Italian colonisation. By 1904 Japan, an Eastern nation, had learned the lesson so well that she defeated Russia.

It was once said : "If you give India John Stuart Mill on *Liberty* to read, you must not be surprised if India asks for liberty." So the nations of the Far East have become independent, and Africa is on the way. Democracy—a Western way, built basically on Christian values—is being tried but sometimes proving difficult. So now Asia and Africa look inward. Naturally they seek in their indigenous religions sources of staying power and integrity. Buddhism, Islam, Hinduism have even gained a new importance, a new evangelism, and have become vehicles of a new nationalism. The religious climate has so changed that Christian evangelism is frequently interpreted as proselytism, and converts to it are viewed as being anti-social. Like political interference, religious interference is resented. New local unities are discovered or re-discovered amongst co-religious groups, amongst coloured peoples, amongst the newly liberated.

Yet deep down these national faiths are on trial. They, too, are wrestling with life. As the old field plough is outmoded by the tractor, and the isolated peasant by the co-operative farm, so the former mental outlook on life and the old religious interpretations of it are today being tested. Rapid new polarisations of thought and belief are taking place. Old religions and new sects rush in to fill a spiritual and psychological vacuum, for sanity demands a pattern, a picture, a philosophy. If revolution uproots fundamentals, it must also seek new bases for living. For all of us, East and West, Truth is to be found in a pattern. The question is : On what Truth will tomorrow's pattern be built ?

Can History Repeat Itself ?

Is there one pattern for us all ? In his war-time pamphlet *From Chaos to Community*, Prof. John Macmurray reminded us that after the collapse of the

Roman Empire, it was the early Church which set the pattern of European life. It "took hold of a motley collection of tribes and peoples and made one civilisation of them. It did this", he says, " not by political unification—for our civilisation has never been politically or economically unified— but by establishing a unity of common life based on common standards of value governing human relationships. It created a common tradition for Europe, out of which has grown the whole effective progress of the world ever since." And writing of our modern world, Macmurray asked : "Why cannot this miracle happen again ?"

Now the historical function of the Gospel has been two-fold : to change people and to pioneer new patterns of social relationship—to regenerate men and to re-create community life on a basis of common obedience to Christ. For centuries Europe was known as "Christendom", and though often failing miserably, western civilisation was built up on Christian conceptions of man and life. Is there a parallel for us now ? As in the ancient Roman world, so today men in every continent suddenly find their old religions become inadequate to new needs. The truths of yesterday are dissolved by the acids of new knowledge and new experience. Men wrestle with life. How can they discover that fundamentally they wrestle with the Lord and Giver of Life ?

The Coming of the Gospel

In *La Morale Humaine* Loisy emphasized the same fact : "What is best in our (European) contemporary society is not the science, the technique and arts more or less derived from Greece, and handed on by the Romans : . . . . The best thing in present day society is the feeling for humanity which has come to us from the Gospel."

Among the contributory factors in the evangelisation of Europe, the Scriptures and knowledge of them played an important part. In A.D. 386 Jerome went to Bethlehem to revise the early Latin manuscripts of the Bible. Slowly but surely his revision grew in importance and became the text-book of European Christianity for a thousand years. "Its language no less than its substance saturates all European literature", wrote Prof. MacKail in *The Legacy of Rome.*

It is tragically true that too often the European has not offered an example to his neighbours, but in face of the pattern of the Gospel he did *know* that when he fell away he was a sinner. He had *seen* the Light. Throughout the history of Europe, as with Jacob, a God-fearing conscience has wrestled with self-interest and sin. In those days events moved slowly. It took centuries for the Christian conscience to move the common people. Today the hand-written Scriptures of our forefathers are replaced by the printing press. Literacy spreads rapidly. No corner of our wide world is any longer isolated from our ability to communicate.

For 150 years it has been the belief of the Bible Societies that the circulation of the Word of God is indispensable if people are to know the One with whom they are wrestling. They have worked at translating that Word into language after language. Over 95% of the world's polulation can now have access to the Scriptures in their mother tongues.

Our New Resources

Among the Bible Societies, new forces have now come to join the traditional ones ; increased strength is given to the older Societies. New resources are ready to be tapped in the interests of the work. Great new lands like Australia have already been planted with a civilisation based on Christian beliefs. Canada, a young giant, leads in Christian world statesmanship. Modern New Zealand was founded on early Christian settlements. Sixty per cent of the millions in the United States of America are attached to Christian churches. These are new nations whose great Christian resources are being harnessed to the spread of the Gospel.

"New Zealand is more interested in Indonesia than any other of her Asia neighbours", says the Secretary of the New Zealand Christian Council. "We will build the Bible House in New Guinea", says the Bible Society in Australia. "Let us help you in Madagascar", says the Norwegian Bible Society, "And us in Congo and India," says the American Bible Society. "Can we go to Mozambique ?" asks the Netherlands Bible Society. In Britain too Scripture production reached the highest level in its history.

But that is not all. The Bible Society of India and Ceylon longs for expansion. Literacy and population grow, yet only a million Scriptures a year are circulated among 380,000,000 people. Brazil takes more Gospels than any other land. Burma now buys four times the number of Scriptures that she bought before liberation. Japan, with a church membership of less than half a million, buys almost two million Scriptures a year. "It looks as if the spirit of Christianity were permeating Japanese life and were beginning gradually to replace or transform the traditional influence of Buddhism. On the conscious surface of the mind, the present painful groping may long continue. But deep down at the subconcious level, the Japanese people may already be finding the bread of life," writes Arnold Toynbee after a recent visit to Japan.

But All This is not Enough

The population of the world increases by twenty five millions a year. Literally hundreds of millions of children are now in schools learning to read, yet last year with all their resources the Bible Societies together only circulated three million copies of the complete Bible and an equal number of New Testaments amongst over 2,000 million people. It is true that in addition, twenty millions of Gospels or other portions went out, but this total effort is grossly inadequate to the urgent hour. The world we are now dealing with is in dire need and time is important. Molten metal soon solidifies. It seems quite fantastic that we should be content. In Asia and Africa just one item of Scripture (may be only a Gospel) was distributed amongst every 154 people !

If we compare this effort of *all* the Bible Societies with the activities of other people bent on urgent business, we begin to gain perspective on our own achievement. In 1946, for example, the (non-Communist) Trade Union movement set to work amongst the people of Malaya. In 1952 it had 121,000 members, including rubber tappers, tin miners, dock workers, even dance-hall hostesses ! Thirteen of their Trade Union officers had been killed by Communists —yet the work went on. Through their report runs the note of urgency—

"The political force and influence of our movement can be dissipated overnight by inaction. If there is a failure to follow through in tangible form disillusion will be great and we shall suffer set-back."

During that same period we hear of the efforts of Communism to build its own pattern of life in Malaya. An observer of the Student Christian Movement wrote : "A tremendous missionary effort for mass conversion is taking place. There is discipline, efficiency, and austerity. There is training in study groups, confession meetings, self-examination, mission bands with more effort expended in a day than the average church at home would dream of in a month."

Such endeavours to win our world must surely cause us searching of heart—not because we would just negatively counter the claims of the Communist pattern, but because we would show men the Light of the World—which is our task. Our forefathers knew the burden of this same task—and they put us to shame. In 1817 Charles Gutzlaff, living in Singapore—long before the steamship could assist him—yearned to plant the Gospel in East Asia. He made no less than seven journeys up the Chinese coast—even reaching Korea—travelling by sailing ship and junk, "ascending rivers, landing here and there, pursued by pirates, stoned by the mob .... distributing hundreds of thousands of Christian Scriptures."

In the light of such endeavour and remembering the joint resources of all our Societies—great and small—can we believe that our achievement is really adequate ? Do the nations even know about us ? Do we count with them in the building of their new pattern ? Ought we not to re-examine ourselves and our work, so that in their longing for fuller life the nations may hear above the noise of their struggle the Voice of Him Who cried : "I *came* that they might have Life."

A Modern Miracle of Tongues

Laton E. Holmgren

IN A WAY, THE WORK of the Bible Societies began on the Day of Pentecost. It was on that day that the Gospel message began to reach men in their own tongues. The record is that there were living in Jerusalem at the time, "devout men out of every nation under heaven" who on that eventful day came together and were amazed because every man heard the Gospel preached " in his own language". The miracle of that day has become the mandate for our day. God has called the Bible Societies, as it were, to see that once again the Gospel comes to men out of every nation under heaven in their own languages. It is to this single task that we are dedicated ; it is our work to see that the mandate is fulfilled and the miracle repeated.

The men to whom the message was preached that first day greeted it with a variety of moods : some were frankly cynical ("They mocked saying, These men are full of new wine") ; others were honestly sceptical ("They were in doubt saying one to another, What meaneth this ?") ; many were seriously interested ("Men and brethren, What shall we do ?") ; thousands believed and were baptized ("They that gladly receive his word were baptized . . . . about three thousand souls"). Times haven't changed much. Those who witness to Christ in today's world find the descendants of those first century listeners in their audiences everywhere.

The world to which we send the Word in more than a thousand tongues today contains many elements which are congenial to the Christian message—and many that are hostile. In most places, the coming of the Bible is welcomed and its sacred message eagerly read ; in others, the Book is regarded with suspicion and systematically destroyed. In some places our task is made easy by those who gladly receive the Word and are baptized ; in others, it is made difficult by those who jeer and spitefully seek to destroy the Christian faith. The enemies of the faith are skilfully persuading their people that to be Christian is to be disloyal to home and country. To possess a copy of the Bible is to risk strong disapproval in some quarters and banishment or even death in others. There are still those who mock.

A world searching for religious belief

There are far more who knock and seek, however. One of the hopeful signs in our bewildered world is the revival of the religious spirit which is taking place in many countries. People in many parts of the free world are turning in surprising numbers to the faith of their fathers. Temples are being rebuilt, shrines restored and even in some quarters, the sacred writings of ancient religions are being revised and published. To be sure, the return to these ancient faiths will not bring men into "the fulness of the knowledge of the glorious Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ", but it is indicative of the universal search of mankind for a faith to see him through these days of crisis. Such men

who are earnestly seeking God can easily be led to find Him in the pages of the blessed Book we distribute. "Whom ye, therefore, ignorantly worship, Him declare I unto you."

Another hopeful sign is that even in the non-Christian lands, there is a widening interest in the Christian gospel. Those who watched the amazing response to Billy Graham's services in Southern Asia and the Far East were impressed with the remarkable interest in Christianity shown by the crowds who attended the meetings. Still further evidence of this welcome interest in the Christian faith is the enormous circulation of the Scriptures each year among non-Christian populations. In Japan, for example, where there are only about half a million Christians, the average circulation of the Scriptures has now become better than a million and a half copies annually. Since the end of the Pacific war, the total number of copies of Scripture distributed in Japan by the Bible Society alone has reached the astronomical figure of 18,969,775, or a copy for every fourth person in the country. In almost all of these lands, the distribution of Scripture by sale far exceeds the Christian population. It is easily demonstrable that the non-Christian world is reading the Bible today in greater numbers than ever before in human history.

The Christian task unfulfilled

But the task is far from finished. The number of unevangelized people in the world is staggering : Japan with a population of 90 millions has but 500,000 Christians ; India with its swarming 400 millions, counts only 4 million Christians ; Thailand with 20 millions has only 15,000 believers. The simple truth is that the normal annual increase in population in most countries far outstrips the circulation of the Scriptures in each year. The total issues of whole Bibles and Testaments is barely one-fifth of the world's annual increase in population. There is much yet to be done if the mandate is to be fulfilled in our time, and we thank God for the remarkable achievements that are being made.

Look, for example, at the Far East. Japan and Korea are recovering remarkably from the crushing impact inflicted by recent wars. Japan today is enjoying a period of unprecedented prosperity and Korea is bravely rebuilding her ravaged cities and villages. The Bible cause is signalized by steadily increasing circulation in both countries. Japan employs fifty devoted colporteurs who fan out over the islands, visiting remote fishing villages, country towns and mountain cabins. The major cities are served chiefly by the churches and Christian bookstores. Almost all the Scriptures distributed in Japan are printed there on commercial presses. The Korean Bible Society has recently moved into its new Bible House in Seoul after continuing to work for long cold months in battered borrowed quarters in Pusan. As these lines are being written there are Korean Scriptures on presses in Seoul, London and New York, a co-operative effort designed to supply the growing demand for the Word of God among Korea's millions. Meanwhile, to the South, a jeep has just been delivered to Formosa, where three Societies work jointly to bring the message to its brave people.

Look, too, at South-East Asia. The whole of this vast territory—on the mainland including Burma, Thailand, Indo-China and Malaya, and in the islands from Sumatra in the West to Luzon in the north-east—is characterized by massive populations, paralyzing poverty and determined nationalism. In modern

times, practically all the countries of South-East Asia, comprising 150 million people, have been colonial or dependent territories, but one by one they are achieving national independence. In each of them there is a kind of grim determination that the benefits of the good life—ample food, adequate shelter, scientific medicine, basic education and political freedom—long the sole prerogatives of the white man, shall now be extended to men of all races and colours. This is what we gingerly call "revolution", and the Book we offer has special relevance for just such times and for just such people. It alone has a hopeful message for men who are seekers after truth and freedom. "Ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free." This year in the Philippines, a Bible van will begin visiting the new villages on Mindanao, offering new hope for these new settlers. Local printing facilities in Indonesia are to be improved so that greater numbers of Scriptures can be delivered to greater numbers of people with greater speed across that vast stretch of islands from Sumatra to Borneo. In Thailand, a country of deep Buddhist traditions, the Scriptures go out from the Bangkok Bible House on bicycles, in motor cars and trucks, by sampan and river steamer and even by air, to the remotest parts of the country, from the Malayan jungles on the south to the almost inaccessible Burmese ranges to the north. Those who have for centuries been seeking the faceless calm of Nirvana are coming to know Him whose face shines with the glory of the personal God.

Upsurge of life in India

The sheer bulk of the vast Indian sub-continent defies description. Its prominence in world affairs is already recognized and the future may see its nearly half billion people cast the deciding vote for or against human survival. There is little cultural, political or religious unity in India today, but each man of its massive millions is characterized by one striking quality : he is going somewhere. If India was once in meditation, it is now in motion. Everyone in India is on the move. Some are going to great new factories and mills (the second largest steel mill in the world is there); some are working on vast public projects (the largest dam in the world is now under construction in North India); some are swarming to the new colleges and universities (there are today 952 schools of higher education in India) ; some are walking to ancient shrines and temples, now being rebuilt and restored ; at least a million each year are moving into literacy and becoming open to the printed word for the first time. India is moving. Where she goes in the next generation may easily depend on how well we do our task of giving India the Bible in which she will discover a Man saying, "Follow me. . . . I am the Way, the Truth and the Life."

Demand for Bibles from emergent Africa

A distinguished churchman has recently said, "If you would see the world of today, look to South America ; if you would see the world of tomorrow, look to Asia ; but if you would see the world of the day after tomorrow, look to Africa." It is no exaggeration to say that Africa is receding from primitivism at the speed of light. Some of it is light provided by great new power plants which have harnessed Africa's fabulously beautiful and mighty rivers. More of it is Light that has come from the pages of the Word of God. One of our most discerning statesmen has said that the most politically explosive force in the Dark Continent during the last 300 years was the printed Bible. In that period Africa was exposed for the first time to influences and pressures from without. Strong among these was the luminous idea of human dignity and freedom cherished in the West, particularly among countries with long biblical traditions,

and Africans today are pursuing that shining idea with a passion that is almost terrifying. Surely this accounts for the amazing popularity of the Bible among all the peoples of Africa, a popularity that makes it almost impossible to meet the clamant demand. From the chilly highlands of Kenya to the sweltering jungles of the Congo, from the sprawling plains of the Rand to the crowded cities of the West Coast, the cry is for more copies of the Scriptures. If there is only a Gospel portion in a man's language, he begs you to provide him with a New Testament ; if he has a Testament, he pleads with you to give him the whole Bible. We must quickly find ways to accelerate our efforts so that no man in all of that vast continent who wants a copy of God's Word shall be deprived of it.

Production of Scriptures still inadequate

While the achievement of the Bible Societies in these lands has been impressive, it is still far from complete. In a recent study made by Dr. Eric North, it is shown that the Bible Societies of the world still distribute fewer Scriptures in the lands where they are almost exclusively responsible for Scripture distribution than in the lands where, along with their work, there are great Scripture publishing houses and many thousands of Christian churches and agencies at work. In the lands of Christian privilege—England and the English-speaking dominions, Scotland, Switzerland, Germany, Holland, Scandinavia, Greece and the U.S.A.—the Bible Societies issue three-quarters of a million more Bibles than in all the rest of the world, 800,000 more Testaments and a million more Gospels and other portions of Scripture. Yet there are only one-sixth as many people in these countries as there are in the areas where the Bible Societies have almost the sole responsibility. In other words, in the areas of greatest missionary need, the Societies distribute annually only one item of Scripture for every 154 people, but in the lands of large Christian populations, the Societies issue one for every 28 people. This condition must be corrected.

The situation calls for thoughtful, strategic planning. The fluid structure of the world we face requires that we achieve a greater mobility in our programmes than has hitherto characterized them. Past patterns, once so effective, may not now be good enough, and a decade of delay in meeting new opportunities could easily create chasms that only a century of effort could successfully bridge. From the China Sea to the South Atlantic we have, on a recent journey, heard men asking to have the Word of God in their own language. Some do not have it because it has not yet been translated into their tongue or texts are obsolete and difficult. Others haven't it because stocks are depleted and supplies sluggish. Still others haven't it because no colporteur is near to carry the Book deep into the bush or high into the mountains. We must quickly find new resources, employ new techniques and expend our final breath to see that no one shall be deprived of the Word of God in his own language and that the miracle of Pentecost shall again be possible.

"To serve the present age,
Our calling to fulfill ;
O may it all our powers engage
To do our Master's will."

The Place and use of the Bible in the Life of Churches

E. H. Robertson

ON 1st MAY, 1956, the United Bible Societies joined forces with the Division of Studies of the World Council of Churches and the International Missionary Council, to launch a study project that would determine the place and use of the Bible in the living situation of the churches. This task, which I was called to lead as U.B.S. Study Secretary, was no academic one. It had at once a threefold purpose: to find out what people were doing with the Bible, to evaluate effective use of it and to promote better use. All three were to proceed hand in hand from the beginning. They have never been separated—study, evaluation, promotion have leaned one upon the other. It has been a busy first year and an exciting one.

First of all, it was necessary to set up some organisation that would make it possible to conduct a world study from a single office in Geneva. There has been extensive travel in Europe and the U.S.A. to discover what channels could be used for the study. The various Bible Societies and many Councils of Churches have co-operated fully. It soon became evident that each country must be treated differently.

In the Netherlands, thanks to the generosity and energy of the Netherlands Bible Society, it has been possible to start a scientific survey of two parishes. This will give us details of the place of the Bible in certain limited areas and under specific conditions. All countries cannot carry through a survey of this intensity or thoroughness. The National Bible Society of Scotland has, through questionnaires to ministers, assembled some information about the use of the Bible in home and church. In both these countries, it will be necessary to broaden out and to study the varieties throughout the land. This has already started in Scotland. A score of selected parishes are under detailed observation which will go on for about two years.

In the U.S.A. it was possible to work through the American Bible Society, the National Council of the Churches of Christ and the various denominational headquarters. By these different channels a wide selection of representative local churches has been made, each watched by some representative in the area. The Study Secretary's approach to these selected churches has been first by way of a questionnaire, a document called "The Case Study of a Local Church", worked out in New York with the able assistance of the staff of the American Bible Society. This document asked questions about specific use, in home and church, by ministers and laymen. In a few cases the minister has replied at once, answering all the questions. This is most valuable, but not enough. It is necessary eventually for a group of representative laymen to look at the questions and use them to look at themselves. It does any church good to look at itself quite honestly in relation to its use of the Bible. Once such a group has formed,

it is the Study Secretary's responsibility to keep in correspondence, provoking new questions and gathering new material. Already this method is yielding results. It must, of course, be constantly correlated with a study of movements and background. For example, during my first visit to the U.S.A., I made a study of Men's Movements. On the next visit it will be necessary to study Women's Movements.

Not all countries can be studied in this way. There are difficulties in Hungary and the Soviet Zone of Germany which make it necessary to modify the method considerably. The case study document has also had to be modified, even in those countries where the method can be used. Some form of organisation for study has been set up in the U.S.A., Scotland, France, Switzerland, West Germany, Norway, Finland and Berlin with the Soviet Zone of Germany. In all these countries, the organisation needs developing, but at least the studies have started. Some work has also been done on developments in England, Wales, the Netherlands and, by correspondence, India. Plans are in hand for visits to Latin America and Asia, which should make it possible to start the studies in these areas too.

While the heart of the matter must remain with the local church, there is a great deal to be learnt from studies undertaken by the W.C.C./I.M.C. Division of Studies, and I have kept close to these. The Evangelical Academies of Germany have also been invaluable and, later, the Institutes for the Study of Non-Christian Religions—mostly in Asia—will help to relate the study to other religions.

Much has already been learnt. Perhaps two things stand out most clearly: the spontaneous growth of house churches and the efforts by many Christians to present the Gospel in terms relevant to industrial life. The former is a protest against mass society and an attempt to restore that sense of belonging one to another which characterised the early Church. In various forms, from the kitchen-kirks of Scotland to the neighbourhood groups of Norway, this movement can be seen all over Europe. It is basically a method of reading the Bible in small groups.

The latter is also widespread. A Methodist minister in the Midlands of England, an Anglican vicar in the industrial north, a group of Presbyterians in South Wales, a French Reformed pastor on the Atlantic coast, a Lutheran minister in the Ruhr—these are a few of the many who are co-operating in this study and helping me to see how the Christian message of the Bible can make sense of an industrial world. Gradually we are unlearning much of the sentimentality which made the Bible remote from contemporary life.

So far, these two areas of the churches' life—what might be called the search for community in the Church and the social and evangelistic witness of the Church—have been studied as aspects of the use of the Bible. In both we are discovering a lack of use, and the disease that follows is clear. Sometimes it is a false use, dividing instead of bringing together, and falsifying witness. But there is much that is hopeful. Patiently, little groups everywhere are rediscovering what the New Testament calls "koinonia", as they read the Bible together. Slowly, good men and true are discovering that, properly understood, the Bible has a message for our generation, a word for living in an industrial world.

These two are not the only areas where a return to the Bible is bringing new life. There are three others of particular note. First, worship. The Roman Catholic Church in France and Belgium has in recent years undergone a liturgical revival. Its worship has become more vital and intelligible. It is no accident that this has gone hand in hand with a return to the Bible. The worship of the whole Church is in need of revitalising and there are signs that this is happening through a more intelligent use of the Bible. This was detected many years ago by the late Dr. H. Wheeler Robinson, whose Bible House lecture on "The Bible and Worship" laid down some of the vital relations between the Bible and the worship we offer to God.

Second, ethical attitudes. There is a hesitancy in the voice of the churches whenever they try to give a lead on the moral questions of our day. They seem, all too often, to be declaring an action right or wrong, for no other reasons than those the world is giving. There are signs of uneasiness at this moral confusion. The Bible, properly used, should give a basis for ethical judgments. Recent conferences of the World Council of Churches, notably one on "The Responsible Society" at Arnoldshain last year, have declared the basic function of the Bible as a guide in our complicated world (U.B.S. BULLETIN, No. 29, p.42).

Third, basic belief. The Church of Christ is divided, and even denominations are divided, about the essential and abiding doctrine of the Church. For what part of the Faith must I be prepared to die? The place of the creeds in determining the basic teaching of the Church and the authority of the bishops or their equivalents has been called in question. There is need to determine how far the Bible is our authority still for the basic Christian teaching.

Thus, the original study on the place and use of the Bible has acquired five sub-headings: in worship, in establishing community, in determining ethical attitudes, in the social and evangelistic witness of the Church and in safeguarding the purity of the Faith. There may yet be more.

The study is growing and it may well change its form as it develops. It has been important to keep this form flexible so that any new material should be used and analysed properly. The one thing that remains is the threefold purpose, and the one form which must be retained is the emphasis on the local church. It will always be necessary to find out what is happening, to assess the material gathered and to give information where it is needed most. The study will always concern itself with what is happening to the Church as it is represented at the local level. The next stage in the study will be reached in Latin America. There, immediately following the meetings of the UNITED BIBLE SOCIETIES, I hope to make my first visit to the countries of this area, and see how far the method used in Europe and the U.S.A. can also be used in this new world.

News from All the World

East Africa

The Rev. Frank Bedford, B.F.B.S. Agent for East Equatorial Africa, reports that the agency now consists of seventeen auxiliaries, as against one in 1949. Some of these auxiliaries are some 1,400 miles apart, which makes the cultivation of the necessary personal contacts very difficult. "There are twelve other places where auxiliaries could be started immediately if only a visit could be made and only time and strength is needed to treble the income we now receive (over £1,500 in 1956). Let us not think, however, that money is our only objective. All our auxiliaries are being encouraged to supervise distribution and to organise publicity and propaganda locally. In some places Bible Study groups have grown up and a youth residential conference was organised last January at Makerere University College, Kampala. We are hoping to establish an East African Youth Group."

Whereas the situation in Kenya is settling down and Africans will this year be able for the first time to elect their representatives to the Legislative Council, and Tanganyika "still remains the hardly-awakened giant". "There are hard days ahead in Uganda. Not only is extreme nationalism sometimes very vocal, but there have been reversions to paganism and witchcraft in some parts of the country..... The next five years will see startling advance and change—whether it will be for the best remains to be seen. Christianity, and all its agencies, like the Bible Society, has now its great opportunity, a chance which will not come again. Basic to it all must be a rapid increase in the distribution of Christian literature and the Scriptures: the field is open, but not for long.

"The Diocesan Council of the Anglican Church is convinced of the need for a deepening of the spiritual life of the people, and a country-wide mission is planned for 1957. The Bible Society has pledged itself to provide the great numbers of Scriptures in Luganda, Lunyoro, Acholi and Teso, needed for this campaign."

Versions, new or revised, are being prepared in 26 different languages of East Africa. In most cases the work is carried out by committees, but in some places isolated translators are busy at pioneer versions. The main principles governing the work of translation in the Agency are summarized by Mr. Bedford as follows :—

1. To keep all translators and committees closely in touch with our Translations Department and thus ensure as far as possible the integrity of the text—surely a basic requirement of our work.

2. To encourage the African assessor and translator and to find ways and means of helping him to realise the need for training and co-operation.

3. We are trying to interest all the churches in translation work so that suitable people can be set aside for one of the primary tasks of evangelism.

4. Wherever possible we are encouraging the production of Union Versions, like Luyia, Kalenjin and Lwoo, in which Scriptures are being produced to cover a wide area.

5. Without prejudice to 4, we realise that even in the areas where Union Versions are in use or contemplated, there will still be need for the production of at least the Gospels in the vernacular languages.

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A pocket Bible concordance has recently been published in the Swahili language. It has been prepared by a missionary of the Bethel mission, the Rev. H. Personn, and printed in the mission's printing plant. The Union Swahili Bible has been used as the basis of this concordance.

French West Africa

The B.F.B.S. Agency in French West Africa is just over one year old. Its secretary, the Rev. E. M. Roulet, has now been able to buy in Abidjan, one of the fast growing cities of Africa, a small property which combines the office and the secretary's house. Scripture circulation during 1956 amounted to 2,147 Bibles, 2,861 New Testaments and 6,231 Portions. Referring to his plans for the future Mr. Roulet writes :

"It is hoped to organise voluntary colporteurs in the larger towns of the territory, who will receive a commission on their sales. The markets which are held weekly (and in some centres daily) should afford a wonderful opportunity for distribution. The one difficulty is that in each place where such colporteurs would operate, it is necessary that some responsible person should undertake to supervise the work, hand out Scriptures and collect cash from sales. Obviously the best arrangement is for local missionaries to do this, but invariably one finds every missionary swamped with work already. Even so, there are those who are willing to add this effort to their already full programme.

"Another means envisaged, is to encourage small shop owners and stall-holders in markets and African townships to stock Scriptures, by giving them a reasonable commission on sales. It is, of course, preferable that those holding such stocks should be Christians, for then each Scripture sale would also afford an opportunity for witnessing to their faith.

"In six centres, one in French West Africa, two in French Cameroons and three in French Equatorial Africa, it is hoped to expand the sphere of colporteurs already working under the auspices of different Mission Bookshops, by providing them with tricycles. It is also hoped to operate one of these tricycles here in Abidjan, with a colporteur circulating in the large African suburbs of Treichville and Adjame.

"If possible, one would like to organise auxiliaries in some of the larger towns. Much propaganda will be necessary in order to bring home to Africans the necessity of supporting by their gifts the Society which has done so much in producing the Word of God in their own languages. Many do not appear to realise just how wide is the gap between the actual cost of producing Scriptures, and the low price at which they are made available to the people so that even the poorest may have a copy.

"In the area of our Agency, where it is estimated that there are over two hundred major languages in a population of twenty-six million people, the whole Bible has been translated into only four of these. It is, however, gratifying to know that the translation of the Bible in seven other languages is proceeding, while eleven New Testament translations are also in hand. Translation of individual Books is being undertaken in some thirty more languages. Contacts have been made with the missionaries

who are engaged in these translations and they have been made aware of the desire of the Bible Society to help them in every way possible."

Austria

Mr. Karl Uhl, B.F.B.S. Agent in Vienna and Secretary of the *Austrian Bible Committee*, reports that over 2,000 Bibles, 3,000 New Testaments and 23,000 Gospels in Hungarian had been circulated among the Hungarian refugees in Austria up to the end of January. Many more Scriptures could have been used had sufficient supplies been available. Most of the distribution was done by the Society's colporteurs and through the workers of the Christian organisations active in the refugee camps. Other organisations, like the Scripture Gift Mission (Britain) and the Freundesdienst (Switzerland) have also supplied large numbers of Gospels in the camps. The B.F.B.S., the American Bible Society and the Swiss Bible Society have provided the Austria Agency with the books. In the middle of February there were still some 75,000 Hungarian refugees in Austria.

Belgium

The Rev. P. Caufriez, General Secretary of the *Belgian Bible Society*, has sent in the following summarized report of the activity of his Society last year :

New Editions

The New Testament with Psalms, in one volume, is now available in the same three sizes as the New Testament published by the Society.

The Bible with thumb-index, bound in imitation leather, has met with great success. It has all the advantages of a 'luxury' Bible, while being moderately priced.

During 1956, owing to the heavy demand, it was necessary to print a new edition of both the ordinary and the luxury Bible.

News Bulletins

The information bulletin entitled "Cahiers de la Société biblique belge" is again being published. Two issues have already appeared. The aim of the paper is to maintain the interest of subscribers and to find new supporters.

Publicity

During Easter Week, 1956, publicity penants were again displayed on the 450 "green taxis" of Brussels. The text on the penants was 'The Bible—the Book of Peace'. Since this campaign was carried out at a time of international crisis (the uprising in Algeria), it drew a great deal of attention.

Home Secretary

Our bookshop representative tried, last year, to pay regular visits to the churches in the French-speaking part of Belgium. The showing of films, with their accompanying lectures, has resulted in an increase in the number of subscribers in that part of the country, who now exceed the number of those in the Flemish-speaking area. The former have increased from 284 in 1955 to 587 in 1956. This effort made over the past year ought to be continued and become a regular feature of the work. An attempt is being made to find in each church a voluntary worker who will collect the subscriptions and donations and be the permanent correspondent of the Bible Society. Many people have already been found to undertake this work. A similar effort needs to be made in Flanders.

Distribution in Belgium

There are 11 colporteurs at work, of whom one is an Italian. Each has a car for use in his own clearly-defined sector. The ten sectors cover the whole of Belgium. The Italian colporteur pays regular visits to the four mining areas, where the Italian miners are at work.

The figures for distribution inside Belgium are encouraging : 28,620 copies in 1954 ; 55,645 in 1955 ; 57,940 in 1956. About one thousand towns and villages have been visited, house to house, during the past two years. In 1956 many markets were visited by our missionaries. The equipment with which they were supplied (folding display case, folding table, portable booth) has enabled our colporteurs to display the Scriptures at about 150 markets during the past year.

Seaside campaign

The special colportage campaign at seaside resorts was again held last summer. For two months two colporteurs, aided by their wives and children, were engaged full-time on this work.

Co-operation with the churches

The churches are calling more and more upon our missionaries for help in colporage campaigns, or in running stalls in the public squares at the time of evangelistic campaigns.

The difficulties remain great, due either to the ignorance of the public regarding the Bible, or to indifference, sometimes even hostility. The effort of Roman Catholic Bible publishers does not seem yet to have penetrated sufficiently deeply among the working-class section of the population.

Our Society is very much concerned with the question of the follow-up of Scripture sales. Consideration is being given to the production of pamphlets and elementary study courses for the areas where there is no Protestant church, in order to enable the reader to discover the contents of the Bible he has just purchased, and to put him, if possible, in touch with the churches.

Future Plans

The Belgian Bible Society has decided to undertake the publication of a 30,000-lined *concordance*. It will be sold at a low price, and available either bound with the Bible or separate.

Colportage work will be begun in *Luxembourg* on 1st May next, thanks to the support of the Swiss Bible Society. Monsieur Siegenthaler, at present engaged in evangelistic work in Switzerland, has been appointed for the work in Luxembourg.

The success of the *publicity campaign* of last year, when Bible Society pennants were fixed to the Brussels taxis for a whole week, has encouraged the Society to make plans to repeat this campaign in 1957.

The Belgian Bible Society has suggested to the Belgian broadcasting company that five minutes should be allowed in its programme each day for *Bible reading*. The Society has suggested that for one week the reading should be done from a Roman Catholic edition of the Bible, one week from a Protestant edition and one week from the Jewish Bible.

Canada

The new General Secretary of the *B.F.B.S. in Canada*, the Rev. Kenneth G. McMillan, started his duties last January. After three months spent in the national office in Toronto, he will be visiting England for the Annual Meeting of the B.F.B.S. in May, and will represent Canada at the Council Meeting of the United Bible Societies in Brazil in July.

From his years in pastoral work, Mr. McMillan brings to his new position a wide knowledge of the needs of ministers across Canada. At the time of his appointment he was Moderator of the Toronto-Kingston Synod of the Presbyterian Church in Canada and Chairman of the Overseas Department of his denominational Board of Missions. Through these activities he has built up a knowledge of stewardship methods which will be of great value in his work as General Secretary of the B.F.B.S. in Canada.

The B.F.B.S. in Canada takes advantage of every possible opportunity to inform those attending national denominational conferences about the work of the Bible Society. Five of them were addressed in 1956 by the General Secretary or by one or other of the District Secretaries.

Most of the District Secretaries addressed annual regional meetings of one or more of the major denominations. This regular presentation of Bible Society work to church conferences, district, national and international, is one of the most effective ways of convincing people that the Bible Society undergirds the Church both at home and overseas.

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One aspect of the Society's work for Canada which has aroused considerable interest in recent months is the presentation of Scriptures to New Canadians.

Many favourable comments have been received about the project initiated in 1955 whereby every New Canadian is offered a copy of the English Bible when he receives his citizenship papers. A judge in Ottawa, the national capital, said at one ceremony—"On behalf of the British and Foreign Bible Society in Canada we present you with a copy of the Word of God. It is the foundation of our institutions—of all the democratic institutions with which we and now you are governed." A western business man remarked to his District Secretary—"It is good for the new citizen, it is good for the country and it is good for the name of the country".

Letters from the New Citizens themselves often include expressions of warm gratitude for this service.

For many years the Bible Society has also offered welcome gifts to immigrants arriving at ports of entry. Whenever possible these have been diglot Gospels with English and the newcomer's mother tongue in parallel columns. In some ports the Society has its own committees which meet the ships, at others it works through denominational port workers, providing them with Gospels to distribute along with other materials.

Canada is one of the countries receiving thousands of Hungarian refugees. In so far as supplies were available, Gospels have been given out at Saint John and Halifax, the main winter ports of entry. Bibles and Testaments have been presented to families and individuals as they took up residence in Canadian communities. In most areas the auxiliaries have worked with the Hungarian Protestant ministers and in several centres a special effort has been made to present to newly-married couples the Bible used for the wedding service. While not many refugees are coming in during the first months of 1957, it is anticipated that supplies will be available for the needs of those arriving later in the year.

China

From the summer of 1949 until the end of 1955, more than 170,000 Bibles, 170,000 New Testaments and about 3,200,000 Portions were circulated by the Bible Society in China.

Another 100,000 Bibles, 100,000 Testaments and 3 million Gospels are in stock in Shanghai or in the other six Bible houses and three agencies. All of these Scriptures, except for a few thousand New Testaments, are in Kuoyu. They were all printed in China on the plates already used in the past. Some editions of the Bible and New Testament have been sold well below the cost price.

The Chinese government is working on the simplification of the Chinese script. Simplified characters are being introduced officially in batches of some 40 to 50 at a time. About 300 words have so far been simplified This means that in the not too distant future Bible editions will have to be prepared which employ the new script.

Bible Sunday was observed for the first time last December in many churches.

Congo

The Congo is developing rapidly and changing fast. The Rev. A. W. Marthinson, B.F.B.S. Agent for that area, also stresses in his latest report the challenge of increased literacy :

"Literacy is increasing very rapidly. More than a million students are attending the various schools in this area and the very important question arises : What are they to read ? Good literature is therefore of the greatest importance. It is very important indeed that they get good magazines and books but the very fundamental tool in creating a new life for the Africans is the Bible. The Bible Societies have therefore a tremendous responsibility in supplying sufficient amounts of the Scriptures in an attractive format. Old translations must be revised and the language brought up to date. What was good twenty years ago is not now meeting with the approval of the new Congo. There is a tremendous field of service for us. Multitudes are to be supplied with Scriptures and the fast-growing literacy and rapidly-changing conditions are therefore offering unparalleled challenges to the Bible Societies as well as to all Protestant missions. The opportunities are ours today. But for how long?"

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The Agency has now been established for two years. Its usefulness is increasingly demonstrated. Yet, writes Mr. Marthinson, "the heart-breaking shortage of Scriptures, especially in some languages, has during the past year been our greatest worry. Several times as many Bibles and twice as many Testaments could easily have been distributed if we had had the stock. Our headquarters in London has done its utmost to fill the need and we expect 'the stream' to come towards us during the coming year".

An edition of 40,000 Gospels in Lingala were also printed in the Congo last year, the first edition undertaken on the spot by the new Agency.

A first Auxiliary has been created in Leopoldville. Another is in formation in Brazzaville and others are planned for other areas. The work and name of the Bible Society is getting known in wider circles and more churches celebrated Bible Sunday last year. "Envol", an illustrated Protestant monthly which is published in Leopoldville and widely circulated in the Congo and French Equatorial Africa, devoted several pages of its second issue of 1957 to the Bible and the history and work of the Bible Societies in the world.

Denmark

The Rev. Dr. Jordt Jørgensen, Secretary of the *Danish Bible Society*, has sent the following report on the work of his Society last year :

During the year 1956 the Danish Bible Society published a new pocket Bible, in which the modern Danish orthography is employed. All references have been reviewed and—something new for Danish Bibles—the 'Perikopen' for each Sunday (the fixed preaching texts) have been marked.

The Danish octavo Bible was also reprinted during the year, together with the Apocrypha.

The new Bible dictionary to the New Testament, which was finished at the end of 1955, has been well received by the public. In 1955 a commentary on the Pentateuch was also published by the Bible Society and in 1956 this was followed by a commentary on Joshua, Judges, Ruth and the books of Samuel and Kings.

The publication of the Gospel of Luke, with illustrations (borrowed from the American Bible Society), has aroused much interest. 50,000 copies were printed, of which nearly 40,000 have already been sold.

The Gospel of John has now been printed with a lively coloured cover, in an edition of 40,000 copies, at the cost of the American Bible Society, and these will be distributed mainly among Sunday schools.

A new edition of the New Testament in large type for those with poor eyesight is now being printed.

The Faroe Church has prepared a new translation of the Bible in Faroese and has asked the Danish Bible Society to undertake its printing.

England

In 1956 the *British and Foreign Bible Society's* figures for Scripture production in England almost doubled those of the previous year. The production of Bibles increased by 25%, reaching nearly 1,700,000 copies; New Testament production increased by almost 100%, making a total of over 1,100,000 copies ; and Gospel production more than doubled, from 1,021,000 copies in 1955 to 2,383,000 in 1956. Production for the year therefore reached a total of 5,200,000 copies. This represents an output of over 20,000 volumes and six tons of despatches for every working day of the year.

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A revision of the New Testament in Kabyle (for Algeria and other parts of North Africa) is now in the press in London for the B.F.B.S. The earliest Scripture to appear in this language was the Gospel of St. John published in 1885. The New Testament appeared in 1902, the chief translator being Eugene Cuendet of the North Africa Mission.

In the succeeding half century an urgent need arose for a revision of this 50-year old New Testament. A committee was set up, consisting of six missionaries and four Kabyle Christians, under the leadership of Mr. C. R. Marsh, a member of the Brethren Mission.

Finland

When a company of Finnish troops was sent to join the United Nations forces in the Suez area last December, the *Finnish Bible Society* distributed to each soldier a copy of the New Testament and Psalms.

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The Finnish Bible Society is at present working on two new editions of the Scriptures : a pocket Bible and a pocket edition of the New Testament and Psalms. Last year the Society completed an edition of the Swedish New Testament. It is now preparing for the publication of the complete Bible in a modern setting, differing in many ways from the traditional form.

Formosa

A Bible van is now in use in Formosa. It has been put at the disposal of Pastor Lai, the island's Bible Society assistant secretary, who is responsible to the Hong Kong Agency. Pastor Lai is now located in Taichung, capital of the Formosan provincial government and seat of the newly-built Tunghai university.

France

A group of women colporteurs, working on a voluntary basis, was formed some time ago in the outskirts of Paris. These women meet on an agreed day in order to engage in colportage, visiting two by two the homes in the working-class area in the suburbs of Boulogne-sur-Seine. Although this work is difficult, the women are on the whole well received and are able to penetrate into the homes more easily than men colporteurs can. An appeal has been made by this group in the religious papers of Paris, inviting other women in different parts of the capital to share in this effort. The *French Bible Committee* has been glad to give its support to this group and hopes that other similar groups can be formed in the provinces.

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The French publishing house of Galimard has just produced, in a collection known as "La Pléiade", the first volume of a new translation of the Bible, done under the direction of Monsieur Edouard Dhorme, one of the most well-known Hebrew scholars. Professor Michaëli, a member of the French Bible Committee, agreed to collaborate in this edition, particulary for the books of Ezra and Nehemiah. This translation has been prepared with special attention to the need of being faithful to the originals and at the same time to its understandability for the present-day reader. The complete work will consist of three volumes. This edition includes a number of explanatory notes particulary intended to convey to the modern reader some understanding of the meaning which cultural and other references had for the contemporaries of the writers of the books of the Bible.

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Thanks to the help of the British and Foreign Bible Society and the American Bible Society, the French Bible Committee, which saw the development of its work hampered by the limitations of its existing premises, has been able to rent new and spacious premises right in the centre of Paris, where the French Committee now proposes to centralise all its stocks.

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The French Bible Committee is in the course of publishing an illustrated pamphlet entitled, "How to approach the open Bible". This pamphlet, nicely presented, will be offered at the same time as the Bible to those who are reached through colportage and evangelisation, and who have never had a Bible in their hands. The pamphlet in fact indicates a pathway through the Bible and gives some advice for reading the Word of God profitably.

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The evangelisation of Corsica, begun in 1852 by the English Methodists, has been continued by the Société Centrale d'Evangélisation. But the work there is difficult, among this primitive population, imprisoned in their customs and traditional habits. The French Bible Society asked Monsieur Stéfanini, a colporteur of the B.F.B.S. Agency in France and himself a Corsican by origin, to attempt some colportage work in the island. His effort coincided with an evangelistic mission organised by "France-Evangélisation", at the head of which is Pastor André Lamorte.

Although quite unspectacular, the results of these related efforts were interesting, in that they revealed the immense needs of this population and the possibility of gathering together in this country, where there is only a handful of Protestants, audiences of 40 to 50 men to hear about the Gospel.

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During 1956 the total number of complete Bibles distributed in France, without taking into account those sent to other Agencies, amounted to 45,188 as against 39,424 in 1955—that is to say, an increase of nearly 18%. A large part of this increase is due to the work of the representative especially engaged in visiting bookshops. Some very interesting results have been obtained during the course of the year in this field, and in many provincial towns today one can see the Bible displayed in the windows of bookshops which previously would never have thought of doing so, or even dared to do so.

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A new edition of the New Testament at present being printed will appear with an attractive cover, modern in style and damp-resisting, which is essential for colportage. The picture on the cover will represent a view in four colours of the town of Nazareth.

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Last October a retreat was held for the colporteurs at work in France and Belgium. It took place in the beautiful estate of the Petit Château du Lac, at Le Nouvion-en-Tiérache, in the Department of Aisne.

The following wishes were formulated by the colporteurs:

"The Bible missionaries of France and Belgium, met at the retreat in Le Nouvion-en-Tiérache, October 1-7 1956 :

1. Having considered :

   (*a*) the improvement in the Roman Catholic editions of the Bible in French and their continually increasing production and distribution ;

   (*b*) that the Protestant editions of the Bible in French are likely to be sold over a wide area, including not only France, part of Belgium and of Switzerland, but in particular over a large area of Africa ;

   (*c*) the desire expressed by many Christians that their Bible should include a certain number of non-theological explanations such as are frequently found in Roman Catholic editions ;

request that consideration be given at once to the possibility of an edition of the Bible in French which would include a chronological table, information on matters of history, geography, natural history, etc., which are very valuable for an understanding of the inspired text ; that consideration should also be given to the possibility of an edition with simple illustrations, in a style similar to that used in England in the Bible illustrated by John Stirling. They consider also that it would be more suitable that similar works should be carried out in a French-speaking country.

2. Having discussed the free distribution of the Scriptures carried out by various bodies, the colporteurs met at Le Nouvion noticed that this free distribution often created difficulties for them in their own sale of the Scriptures. Consequently, while understanding the point of view of the bodies engaged in free distribution, the colporteurs expressed the wish that the said organisations should have included in each copy given free of charge a note such as the following : "This copy of the Scripture is offered gratis, thanks to the generosity of Christian friends."

Germany

The *Stuttgart Bible Society* has despatched fifty cases filled with the first edition of the Truk New Testament, a language spoken in the South Caroline Archipelago. This publication is the result of fourteen years' work on the part of the Rev. R. Neumaier of the Liebenzeller Mission, who was assisted in his work by local Christians.

Last January the new revision committee for the Old Testament of the Luther Bible held its first meeting, under the chairmanship of Dr. Brunotte, deputising for Bishop Dibelius. The committee is subdivided into five working groups, in each of which one Old Testament professor and two pastors who are well-versed in Old Testament problems will co-operate. Each group will deal with a number of Old Testament books. The work is to be done on the basis of the trial edition prepared by a previous commission, to whose work Bible Society leaders and church authorities wished a final check given. The present commission has been appointed in part by the Bible Societies and in part by the Council of the Evangelical Church in Germany.

The *Berlin Bible Society* has recently been expanding its exhibition materials to a considerable extent. The Society now has several sets of exhibits available, for large or small halls. The general aim of these exhibitions is to acquaint visitors with the history of the Bible from the early manuscripts to the missionary editions of the Bible Societies and the most modern German editions. The larger exhibitions attempt, in addition, to express in a visual way the relevance of the Bible for modern man and the importance of its use in the Church. The Society has also published two useful guides through the history of the Bible, which follow the same pattern as the exhibits. Many requests for this exhibition material have already reached the headquarters of the Society.

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A meeting took place in Bielefeld last January of the Committee for Bible Mission, which was attended by representatives of the two Societies (the American Bible Society and the British and Foreign Bible Society) which support the programme, as well as by the U.B.S. General Secretary. Dr. Alfred Müller reported on the work among refugees during 1956. Almost 280,000 refugees crossed over into West Germany during the year, about half of whom were below 25 years of age. Over 10,000 Bibles, 12,000 New Testaments and 40,000 Portions were distributed among the refugees under the auspices of the Committee.

The Committee itself published a special edition of the Gospel of Luke in a modern setting, which has met with great success and a new edition is planned for the present year. The illustrated Gospels in magazine format have also been well received, particularly in hospitals, convalescent homes and the camps in which about a quarter of a million refugees are still accommodated. Scriptures were also given to former prisoners-of-war returning from the U.S.S.R.

For two years the Committee has contributed in total or in part to the salaries and expenses of fourteen missionary-colporteurs. The churches or organisations under whose auspices these colporteurs were working, have now agreed to cover the entire expense involved. The Bible Mission Committee plans now to maintain only two or three missionaries, in addition to Dr. Müller. These missionaries will visit all the camps distributing Scriptures and contact the church workers who are active among the refugees, encouraging

them to make full use of the Scriptures in their ministry. Experiments made by Dr. Müller last year in this field have proved most encouraging. The Bible Mission Committee has also been very active among the Hungarian refugees, to whom it has distributed thousands of Scriptures.

Dr. Müller was also able to report an encouraging increase in local support for the Bible Mission work. The "Friends of Bible Mission", a number of local Bible Societies and some churches, have contributed an amount of 14,000 D.M. (£1,250) during the last fifteen months. It is hoped that with the co-operation of the new missionaries, interest in the work will be extended and strengthened.

Ghana

Before he left the Gold Coast in 1939, Dr. E. L. Rapp, of the Basel Mission, had revised the Twi New Testament and took home with him the draft revision of the Old Testament.

During recent years the orthographies of the Gold Coast have been revised by the Government and the National Christian Council, therefore, asked that before Dr. Rapp's MSS were printed they be transcribed into (1) the orthography for Akuapem and (2) that for Asante-Akyem. In order to speed up these transcriptions and to put finishing touches to the revision, the British and Foreign Bible Society enquired of Dr. Rapp if he could return to the Gold Coast for a few months. The Mainz University, where Dr. Rapp is a Professor of Oriental Languages, consented to his having an extended vacation period to undertake this.

During Dr Rapp's six months' visit he was able, with the expert assistance of Mr. C. A. Akrofi (Akuapem) and Mr. E. C. Denteh (Asante-Akyem) to prepare the New Testament and Psalms for the press. He hopes to make a second short visit to the Gold Coast this year in order to go over the Old Testament in a similar way.

In the meanwhile, the Society has continued to meet a growing demand for Scriptures on the Gold Coast with photographic reprints of the old version, but this new version is urgently needed for the Ghana people who have so recently become self-governing.

Hungary

Scripture production has been continuing in Hungary in spite of recent events. During the winter an edition of 28,000 New Testaments came off the press. An edition of the Bible had been printed earlier in the year. Plans are afoot now for further editions, particularly a new edition of the small size New Testament which has been out of print for several years, and a reprint of the large-size family Bible, particularly needed for old people.

The Old Testament revision committee has not met since last October.

India

Reporting on last year's developments in the work of the *Bible Society of India and Ceylon*, Mr. Mahanty, the General Secretary of the Society, states that Scripture circulation was the highest for the past ten years and again passed the million figure. Bible circulation—over 74,000 copies—almost trebled that of 1947 ; 72,000 New Testaments were circulated, as against 41,000 in 1947 ; and Gospel circulation—978,500 copies—is the highest of the decade, with an increase of over 180,000 above last year, which was the second best.

Contributions received locally during the year also reached another record with Rs. 200,000 (over £15,000), or twice as much as five years ago.

Most of the contributions, it is stressed, came from the donors of small gifts, "often entailing real sacrifice on the part of the givers, and the increase of the number in these small gifts shows the extent to which the Society is gaining the interest of individual Christians. . . . "

The Ceylon Auxiliary contributed over one quarter of the total amount of gifts received.

Seven new auxiliary branches were opened during the year, bringing the total to 71, over three times as many as in 1951. "The branches organise Bible study and prayer groups, help to raise financial support and develop a feeling of oneness among different sections of the Church in the common task of distributing the Scriptures. The branches strengthen the Society in many ways . . . . "

Women's work is developing and has also greatly contributed to the financial result of the year. With two additional regional secretaries added to the staff, the number of affiliated groups increased from 326 in 1955 to 412 last year. These groups are also taking an active share in the distribution of the Scriptures. "This activity," writes Mr Mahanty, "which is basic to the work of the Society, will gather still greater momentum when it is given a central place in the programmes of all the affiliated groups."

The 'Bible in Every Home' project, which was started at the end of 1955 in order to ensure, with the help of the churches, that every Christian home in India and Ceylon has a copy of the Bible or the New Testament and gives it a central place in its daily life, has so far resulted in the distribution of just under 10,000 Bibles and Testaments in 14 languages. More would have been circulated had the stocks in some languages been more plentiful. "The authorities of the various churches have been requested to consider including the presentation of a Bible in their marriage services, so that every new Christian home would have a Bible. The response received so far to this request has been very encouraging. We would stress once again that in the carrying out of the Christian task, the strategic point for concentration is the Christian home. An effort to ensure that every home has the Bible and uses it as the text-book of its daily life is bound to make the Church creative and alive, empowering it for its Christian task. A Church that is possessed by the Gospel cannot fail to share it . . . . We are hoping that every church in the country will become a distributing centre."

The Bible Society is now studying the possibility of opening Bible shops in the business area or the bazaar of important cities or pilgrimage centres, where there are no Christian bookshops. They hope to have three or four such shops started during the present year.

Mr. Mahanty also reports that translation work is proceeding in 26 languages. Five of them are new, much of this work being carried out in the Assam auxiliary area. Revision work is being done in a further 11 languages.

Indo-China

The General Director of the China Inland Mission, Oversea Missionary Fellowship, Dr. J. O. Sanders, reports in a recent number of the Society's periodical "The Millions" that the Mission's Council has decided to extend the Society's operations in Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos, and "to share the responsibility for the evangelisation of the Chinese in these areas and the unreached tribes of Laos". A team was appointed to survey the field and left for Indo-China in January of this year.

Iran

Colportage work continued to develop favourably in Iran last year. The Rev. A. Nakhosteen, B.F.B.S. Agent in Iran, reports that there are seven full-time and one half-time colporteurs in the Society's service. They sold over 27,000 volumes during 1956—almost 9,000 more than in 1954. The total circulation amounted to 32,600 copies. "There have been no religious agitations of any kind, which are always started and sponsored by various centres of interest. There has therefore been freedom in Christian work .... There has been interest in the things of the Spirit in all quarters."

Israel

In spite of the disturbances in the situation, Scripture circulation in 1956, amounting to 15,000 copies, was at the same level as in the previous year. There has been a noticeable increase of interest in the reading and study of the Bible in the country. The study of the Old Testament is compulsory in schools and lectures on the New Testament are held at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem. Complete Bibles can be found in many school libraries. Last year, as in previous years, a Bible Congress, in which the historical aspect of the Old Testament is stressed was held in Jerusalem, attended by people from all walks of life.

Japan

The *Japan Bible Society* reports that over 1,180,000 of the 1,340,000 Portions circulated last year were sold by colporteurs. Of 430,000 Testaments circulated, about 315,000 went through bookshops and depositories. More than three times more books were circulated through the book-trade than through the churches. This proportion is higher than in 1955. Only 500 bookshops have been contacted so far out of the hundred thousand existing in Japan. Sales through bookshops make it possible to reach people who are outside of the churches. The approach to new bookshops will be intensified during the current year.

Korea

The Rev. Young Bin Im, General Secretary of the *Korean Bible Society*, reports the following on the work of his Society :

Thirteen of the best bookshops have been formed into a Federation of Bookstores. Each of them is located in strategic cities or towns all over South Korea. The members themselves employ their own colporteurs on either a voluntary or a commission basis. They give their own colporteurs the same discount rate as that given by the Bible Society, for the Society gives the members of the Federation a special discount in order to get them to encourage Scripture circulation. The result of this arrangement was seen in the fact that 40% of the total circulation in Korea during 1956 was carried out through the bookstores. They feel encouraged to try and increase the percentage to 60% this year.

The Bible Society engaged colporteurs on a part-time basis. Any colporteur who is able to sell 4,000 copies of Scripture portions per month is paid Hw20,000 and any who can sell 2,200 copies per month is paid Hw15,000. The latter arrangement is intended particularly for work in rural areas. If a bicycle is given to him or her, an additional 500 copies must be sold, making a total of 2,700.

Some students from the theological seminaries are volunteering for this work of selling Scripture portions. When any of them sells 400 copies per month, he or she is paid Hw1,000. For them the work is carried on every weekend.

Since this system was brought into effect, the circulation of Scripture portions has very much increased. In 1955 the total was 342,362 copies, but after applying the new system, as an experiment, the figure for 1956 increased to 559,515 copies. It is expected that there will be a much larger circulation this year, since the system is now more thoroughly established.

*

An agreement has been reached between the Korean Bible Society and the Christian Broadcasting Station of Korea. A special programme has been worked out jointly to publicize the work of the Society. The following is a sample programme:

30 minutes radio drama, the text to be checked beforehand by the Society

5 minutes spot news on the work of the Society

15 minutes lecture, the lecturer to be provided by the Society

5 minutes spot news on the work of the Society

The programme is well spread out over each month and is to continue for six months, as a trial period. If the result is satisfactory, it will be continued.

During the week before the Universal Bible Sunday, there was a programme on the work of the Society almost every night, and the Society became well known throughout the country. On the morning of Bible Sunday there was a special broadcast service of worship and it was well received.

*

Six bicycles sent by the British and Foreign Bible Society to Korea have been put into effective use. No persuasion will now be needed to get colporteurs to go into the rural areas, because they can now go by bicycle. They can carry a large quantity of Scripture portions on these bicycles and penetrate deeply into rural areas. The use of the bicycle will also eliminate heavy travelling expenses. Nowadays commercial bus services in Korea reach to almost every part of the country, but the fares are exorbitant. That is why our colporteurs were not eager to visit the rural communities, although they were urged to do so. They said they could not even pay the bus fares from the amount they received from their sales. Now they have bicycles and they seem glad to do whatever the Society asks of them.

Bicycles being supplied by the American Bible Society are on their way. When they reach Korea, more colporteurs will be required and it will be possible to distribute our Gospel portions even in mountain areas.

Netherlands

In November 1956 the *Netherlands Bible Society* resumed its contacts with students. On this occasion about 25 theological students of the Municipal and free Universities, both of Amsterdam, were received in the Bible House. The aim of these gatherings is to confront future pastors with the work of the Bible Societies and to impress upon them that their warm support is indispensable for the effective functioning of Bible Society work in the Netherlands.

*

A request reached the Netherlands Bible Society recently from various representatives of different churches, to organise an event similar to the German Kirchentag, in which all Protestant churches in the Netherlands could participate. This request was specifically addressed to the Bible Society because it is a traditional meeting place for Protestants of all churches and denominations.

In view of a variety of considerations, the General Committee decided not to act upon this request. However, it did ask the Committee for the

Good use of the Bible—a subsidiary organisation of the N.B.S.—to make the experiment in different places in Holland of Bible reading by people from different churches and denominations.

For this purpose in the first place a suburb was chosen, where last year a colportage drive was organised, in which some 200 men and women had assisted. On this occasion the Bible was offered from door to door. These were busy days for all who took part, but the action was eminently successful. To this suburb the question was put: Would these 200 co-operators in the colportage drive now be prepared to read the Bible together? The answer was affirmative and the first Bible reading day was organised. On Saturday, 28th January 1956, one hundred residents met together. They first listened to an introduction to II Corinthians 4, which was to be the first portion under review. They then divided into five groups to discuss this portion and the introduction, under the guidance of five non-theologians, who had already studied the same portion the night before. After these group discussions the plenary meeting was resumed, in which the five leaders reported on the discussion in their group and passed on a number of questions which had been raised. The introducer then answered these questions as far as possible and summed up. After dinner together, the same was done with an Old Testament passage.

Of course, this was a strenuous occasion. Apart from the dinner interval, people were busy from 2.30 p.m. until 10.15 p.m. But everybody thought it well worth the trouble. If one thing became plainly apparent during this meeting it was that joint Bible reading by persons from all kinds of churches and denominations is enormously refreshing, and nearly all the visitors went home thankful, realising that we possess invaluable riches in the Bible.

The second experiment was made at the Hague, entirely along the same lines. Here it was agreed beforehand to limit the number of participants to one hundred, and every church or group was allotted a number of places in proportion to its membership. Here again the experiment was entirely successful. It was a memorable day which meant much for the discussion of the Bible by people of all churches and denominations in this part of the city.

*

During 1956 the two Bible vans of the Netherlands Bible Society again proved their great value. The sales of Bibles and hymnbooks amounted to f.90,000.

Again and again it has been proved that even in areas in which it is supposed to be difficult to place Bibles, experience proves the reverse. This form of colportage often tends to stimulate local churches, since owing to its principal of working in villages, cities and other areas systematically, it is constantly necessary to enlist the help of the local people.

*

Towards the end of January, Dr. J. Noorduyn left for Indonesia to start work on a revision of the Bible in Sundanese. The existing translation dates from 1891 and, apart from a partial revision of the New Testament in 1928, it has remained unchanged.

*

A Bible in the Indonesian language is at present in the press in Amsterdam. This in itself is hardly worth mentioning since it would seem no more than routine business, but the interesting feature of this printing is that it is the first time since 1930 that a Bible in one volume has been published in Indonesian.

The last complete Bible was the so-called Klinkert version, first published in 1889. In 1938 the Bode version

of the New Testament appeared, and since then the Old Testament (Klinkert version) and the New Testament (Bode version) have been published separately.

In view of the fact that the Indonesian Christians want a Bible in one volume, and that it will still take at least a few years before the revision of the Indonesian Bible is ready, the co-operating Bible Societies have decided to combine the Klinkert Old Testament and the Bode New Testament in one volume. There is, of course, a considerable difference in language between the two parts, which will give a certain disparity between old and New Testaments. To remedy this as far as possible, at least the orthography of both Testaments is being moderised. It is hoped that this publication will prove useful in bridging the gap until the publication of the revised Indonesian Bible.

New Zealand

Contributions in New Zealand towards Bible Society work continue to be the highest in the world, when calculated on a per capita basis, with about five pence per head of the population.

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The Council of the *B.F.B.S. in New Zealand*, meeting last autumn, on the occasion of the visit of the Rev. Dr. W. J. Platt, asked "to be permitted to share in the cost of the Bible Society work in South-East Asia to the extent, in the first instance, of contributing £NZ2,000 per annum". This is an endeavour to strengthen the sense of responsibility on the part of the Christians in New Zealand for the task of providing and distributing Scriptures in South-East Asia.

Norway

The Rev. Alf Hauge, General Secretary of the *Norwegian Bible Society*, reports as follows on the activity of his Society during 1956 :

In April 1956 the 140th anniversary of the Norwegian Bible Society was celebrated at the Society's annual meeting. The speakers were the Rev. Dr. W. J. Platt, Bishop Berggrav and the General Secretary. Bishop Berggrav, resigning as chairman of the Society and member of the Board, was honoured for his outstanding work in the Society.

■

At the Annual Meeting of the Board of the Norwegian Bible Society, held last November, it was decided to begin work on a new translation of the Bible into Norwegian and neo-Norwegian.

The existing version of the Bible in Norwegian was completed in 1904 and slightly revised in 1930. The version in neo-Norwegian was completed in 1921 and revised in 1938. The linguistic evolution in the two official forms of the Norwegian language has during recent decades developed so fast that the existing Bible text is felt to be too remote from the younger generations. A committee has worked out the principles for the new translations.

*

In February 2,000 copies of the first edition of the four Gospels in Mbum were despatched to the Cameroons. The Gospels were translated by the Norwegian missionaries Nils Otterøy and Sverre Fløttum, and were printed in Oslo.

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During 1956 much emphasis was laid upon Bible study groups. The travelling secretary of the N.B.S. visited 108 congregations and arranged about 50 courses and shorter instructional meetings, to help groups already at work and to instruct leaders for new groups. Some 250 groups have

been recorded, out of which 150 were newly-formed during the last year.

*

385 Bible teams are at work all over Norway, partly helping with Bible study groups and Bible distribution, partly in collecting funds for world-wide Bible work.

Panama

Last autumn, sixteen representatives of missions and churches at work in Central America and particularly in the area adjoining the Panama Canal Zone, met at the invitation of Secretary Limkemann for a conference on Bible Society Agency operations. Dr. Wonderly and Mr. Denyer of the American Bible Society Translations Department staff were present. Consideration was given to means of increasing local support for the Agency. It was pointed out that only about 10% of the Agency budget is derived from local contributions. Except for a few items being sold in Panama, it was agreed that the prices of Scriptures should not be increased throughout the Agency area. It was obvious that more attention needed to be given to promotional techniques and the advice of the committee proved helpful to Secretary Limkemann in devising a satisfactory approach to the church constituency.

It was reported at the meeting that the idea of voluntary distribution by all people connected with the evangelical movement in Central America had been spread through private conversation and public addresses. An outstanding example of results achieved is the experience of Mr. Auler, missionary of the Evangelical and Reformed Mission in Honduras, who has emphasized such distribution throughout his mission and then on a vacation trip by bus through Honduras, Nicaragua, Costa Rica and Panama continued to spread the idea himself by example and word. Though it is too soon to know what the response may be, the Agency has issued a call for 10,000 volunteer distributors for 1957.

Philippines

The following notes are taken from the report of the Rev. W. H. Fonger, the American Bible Society Secretary in the Philippines Agency :

The demand for Scriptures is constantly increasing. While it is true that the total distribution in 1956 fell slightly below the previous years, the trend is definitely upwards, particularly with regard to Bibles and New Testaments. The number of Christian workers is growing rapidly. The total church membership has also greatly increased in the past few years. Another thing that has led to greater interest in the Bible is what seems to be a new attitude in the Roman Church. A large commercial concern in the United States has recently established a branch in Manila for the purpose of selling what they term Basic Knowledge Literature. The first book put on sale here was the Douay Bible. That is a very large, very beautifully bound volume selling at $35.00. To date several hundreds have been sold, and they are now bringing in a much lower-priced volume of the same book. These are being sold by house-to-house canvassers. It is also reported to us that one of the church orders is selling Douay Bibles and promoting Bible reading in the homes. The business firm referred to has been able to secure letters of approval from some of the clergy and these letters are said to urge the faithful to read. All of this is surely something new in the Philippines, and is the first we have heard of any attempt to make the Douay Bible available. . . . .

In the Philippines no campaign for funds may be carried on without special permit from the Government. Such permits, when granted, always have definite limits as to length of

time they can continue. However, no such requirements exist for securing memberships for any organisation and membership fees may be charged. Our Bible House is now making a campaign for members with fees and privileges patterned more or less after the parent organisation in the U.S.A. Under the direction of our new Secretary, Mr. Taglucop, that campaign is well under way.

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In order to relieve the Agency's secretary in his work and leave him more time to develop the programmes of Bible distribution and Bible use among the churches and also to promote giving by the churches to the work of the Bible Society, the American Bible Society Board of Managers has appointed as from June next a Business Manager to the Agency, in the person of the Rev. W. W. Groesbeck, missionary of the Free Methodist Church in the Philippines.

*

Under the leadership of Dr. G. H. Waterman and his associate translation consultant, the Rev. Lumen C. Roble, the work of translation and revision is continuing to make steady progress. Each of the six committees in charge of six major dialect translations and revisions of the Bible, is working hard in the face of great demands for new dialect revisions. There are seven other committees translating the Gospels into seven minor dialects. A thousand copies of their work have already been printed and distributed.

*

Colportage work in the Philippines received impetus lately on the arrival of a new van, a Willys four-wheel drive "Sedan Delivery." This was given by the Disciples of Christ. The van with complete audio-visual equipment, will be used by the Rev. Samuel Raterta, colporteur of the Philippine Bible House.

About 1,000 volumes of Scripture were sold during the nightly meetings held during the "Crusade for Christ" which lasted three weeks at the Manila's Sunken Garden. Every night, hundreds of people flocked to the booth of the Philippine Bible House, which was the only one allowed in the Crusade ground. The many decisions, which reached the astonishing figure of 5,400, considerably increased the sale of Scriptures during the period.

Following this "Crusade for Christ" plans were being made for a "Festival of Witness", from February 9 - 10 in the same Sunken Garden. Sponsored jointly by the Philippine Independent Church and the Philippine Episcopal Church, and participated in by the various Anglican communions of Thailand, Korea, Hongkong, Malay States, Burma, Borneo and India, it was hoped that the delegates to this "Festival of Witness" might have a kind of religious experience similar to that of people who had attended the earlier meetings in the Sunken Garden. The Philippine Bible House has been invited officially to supply the much-needed Scriptures for the visiting delegates and worshippers at the "Festival of Witness".

Portugal

In the latest instalment published of the "Portuguese and Brazilian Great Encyclopaedia", about ten pages have been devoted to the subject : Biblical Versions. The text has been prepared by E. H. Moreira of the Portuguese Presbyterian Church, and gives a general picture of the history of biblical translations until the 16th century and a survey and nomenclature of all Scriptures published since that time in languages spoken in Portuguese territories in Europe and overseas. The Bible in whole or in part has been issued in 65 such languages. Special reference is made to the work of the

Bible Societies and to the services rendered by them in the field of translation. The article closes with a brief survey of significant modern versions, Roman and non-Roman, in Spanish, French and English.

At the beginning of 1957 the first instalment of an illustrated Bible, with a foreword by the Cardinal-Patriarch of Lisbon, also appeared in Lisbon. The translation and the notes were prepared by Professor Dr. J. Gonzaga da Fonseca, S. J., and Canon José da Costa de Oliveira Falcao, Professor of Holy Scripture.

Rhodesia

"Ten thousand miles", reports the Rev. M. W. Booth, B.F.B.S. Agent for the Agency of Rhodesia and Nyasaland, "of travel through this great Federation, visiting Missions and churches during the past year, has resulted in closer relationship and more effective work between the Bible Society and the missions we serve. At the same time the trip served to arouse greater interest and support from both the European and African congregations. In particular it helped us to see (*a*) the needs of the African Church ; (*b*) the difficulties of transport and distribution ; and (*c*) how committees could be formed that would result in the formation of both African and European auxiliaries aiming, where possible, at a complete integration of the two. The unique privilege of the Bible Society is to provide a means by which the Christian churches can present a united front and find common ground. The celebrations of the Third Jubilee sparked the first ecumenical effort put forward in this territory.

Three new versions of the Bible—either new translations or revision—have been prominent in the past year's programme of work.

The coming of the *Bemba* Bible marked a unique achievement for Northern Rhodesia. Appearing in September 1956, this long-awaited Book found a wide acclaim. Celebrations of welcome took place in many areas. Remarkable is the fact that in this book two diverse dialects have been welded together to make an acceptable version for so large a tribe.

This fusing of dialects is also a feature of the revision of the *Shona* Bible, planned and set in action in recent months. Here we have four dialects being brought together in a Union Version and set in a new orthography. Karanga, Manyika, Zezuru and Kori-Kori have many similarities, but many expressions and ideas will have to receive careful study in order that they may be put in a form that will be readily understood. Shona is the language of Mashonaland in Southern Rhodesia as Bemba is the major tongue of Northern Rhodesia.

On the south-east border of Southern Rhodesia and stretching as far as the coast into Mozambique is a tribe that speaks *Chindau.* It is not a large tribe, but among its older people are those who would never be able to understand the Bible in Shona. At Easter time of this year we shall welcome a first translation of the entire Bible into this language and celebrations are being planned in this area.

A new stress is being laid on the part of African churches in particular on the importance of Bible Week. This year we are planning to have Bible Week celebrated in as many African locations as possible. Here the clergy of all Christian bodies come together to make their plans —the ecumenical spirit put into action. Exhibitions and motion pictures will be shown, and the hope is that the Word of God will become better known to those whose knowledge of it is very limited.

Circulation in the Agency in 1956 shows a great increase over figures for the previous year. Over 110,000 copies of the Scriptures were circulated, against 75,000 in 1955. Almost half of the circulation is represented by complete Bibles, under one third by New Testaments and less than a quarter by Portions.

Scotland

The Rev. Dr. Wm. C. Somerville, General Secretary of the *National Bible Society of Scotland*, reports the following 'highlights' in the Society's activity in 1956 : The Society

—encouraged translation in many languages, setting up the Tumbuka Old Testament in type, and completing first drafts of parts of the Bible in several other tongues ;

—provided large numbers of Bibles and gave grants for Scripture distribution in Argentina, Brazil, Peru, Venezuela, Jamaica, the Bahamas, West, Central and East Africa and Egypt ; assisted in the provision of Bible vans in Argentina, Brazil and Kenya ;

—assisted with colportage work in Belgium, France, Greece, Italy, Madeira and Portugal ; made a grant of £500 towards the cost of new editions of the Hungarian Scriptures ;

—sent £3,600 to the Bible Society of India and Ceylon to assist in colportage work and in the drive to provide a Bible in every Christian home ; sent grants to Israel, Iran and Pakistan, including £800 to provide a Bible reading room in Sialkot ;

—maintained, in conjunction with the B.F.B.S., its agent Mr. I. Morrison as supervisor of the growing Bible Society activity throughout Malay and Borneo ; sent a grant to help in Indonesia ;

—shared in the work in Hong Kong, Formosa and other centres of Chinese population ; assisted in the preparation of a new large-type edition of the Korean Bible ;

—supplied many customers through its depots in Edinburgh, Glasgow and Aberdeen ; supported colportage work within Scotland ; provided Bibles and Testaments for Hungarian refugees arriving in Scotland, and copies of the Acts of the Apostles for free distribution through the "Tell Scotland" movement ; organised a nation-wide Bible Essay Competition.

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A recent report on the work among the peoples of Sarawak and North Borneo was given by Dr. W. C. Lees of the Borneo Evangelical Mission during a visit to Scotland. One of these peoples, the Muruts, already have part of the Scriptures in their own language, but others, the Kelabits the Kayans, the Kenyahs, the Dusuns, the Tagals, the Penans and the Bisayas are still "on the waiting list" and without a single verse in printed form. Dr. Lees is a medical man, but he is especially interested in linguistics and is spending much of his time in the preparation of first, tentative translations, some of which have already been run off on a duplicator. The inspiring feature of the Sarawak field is that those who have already become followers of Jesus Christ show no delay in offering their help in carrying the Gospel even farther afield. One item for special prayer is the need for competent Sarawak assistants to help with language work in the tongues of the more remote tribes.

Switzerland

The Rev. O. Naegeli, Secretary of the *Swiss Bible Society*, reports a 50% increase in the 1956 income of the Society over the previous year (£1,750 against £1,150). This figure does not include an amount of £2,000 collected for the publication of Scriptures for Hungarian refugees.

The funds collected have been allocated towards the cost of the Bali Bible published in Stuttgart ; for Bible work in Austria ; salary and expenses of a colporteur for Luxembourg and the German-speaking areas of Belgium. This colporteur will begin his service on 1st May next. He served a trial period last year in Luxembourg.

During the current year, the leaders of the Bible Society hope that it will be possible to contribute towards Bible Society work in Africa, as well as to increase interest in the circulation of the Bible in Switzerland itself.

The "Freundesdienst", one of the member organisations forming the Swiss Bible Society, distributed a copy of St. John's Gospel to all Hungarian refugees in Switzerland, numbering at the time 7,000. The same organisation has also supplied thousands of free Gospels to evangelical organisations working among the Hungarian refugees in Austria.

Thailand

The Rev. Ming C. Chao, A.B.S. Agent in Thailand, has sent the following notes on Bible Society work in that country :

In 1956 the circulation of Scriptures in Thailand reached a record total of 385,561 copies. Bible circulation in Thailand will be on the increase in the years to come and there are three main reasons for this. First, there is an increasing number of missionaries coming to Thailand. From a little more than 100 in 1950, there will be over 450 missionaries in 1960. These missionaries are the main distributors of the Scriptures.

Second, there is a sign of growing vitality among the indigenous churches in circulating the Scriptures. There are three main groups of indigenous churches as the result of different theological backgrounds and traditions. Most of them co-operate actively with the Bible Society in the distribution of the Scriptures.

Third, the general public is increasingly confronted with opportunities of getting the Scriptures and the chances are repeatedly offered to them. Promotional literature or letters have been mailed to prospective buyers. Booths for displaying Scriptures are set up in different fairs, in co-operation with other missions.

The number of colporteurs has increased and they are widely located all over the country. All the Christian hospitals and clinics are offered supplies of Scripture Portions for free distribution among the sick. The number of secular book stores that are willing to carry our Scriptures has been more than trebled since summer 1956. Advertisements have been put in newspapers and public places. An increasing number of volunteer colporteurs has been enlisted to circulate the Scriptures. Young people of different churches are encouraged to co-operate with the Bible Society in Scripture distribution.

Because of the growth in strength of the indigenous churches, and the trend of major mission boards' policy in the matter of devolution, and the change of environmental conditions of our work, suggestion was made to the headquarters officers by the Agency Secretary to change the name American Bible Society in Thailand to the Thailand Bible House. Subsequently, the A.B.S. Foreign Agencies Committee, meeting last October, adopted the following resolution :

> "To recommend to the Board of Managers that the name of the Thailand Agency be changed to the Thailand Bible House, effective December 9th."

This action was approved by the Board of Managers at its meeting in New York on 1st November. The change of name will prove to be a major step in giving root to the Bible Society's cause in Thailand.

The Thai Bible Revision Committee has been making steady progress during the past year. It has completed the revision of three books this year : Genesis, Psalms and Proverbs. Genesis is to be printed in a trial edition. The Thailand Bible House has encouraged a local printer with a loan, to help in designing an indigenous Thai type, which eventually will mean a great improvement in the printing industry of this country. The new Thai type may save 30% of the total space of the present Thai Bible, which is thick and bulky. Meetings of the Thai Bible Revision Committee are called three times a year. During these meetings, the Rev. H. Grether, chairman, and his colleagues have a chance to present the fruit of their work to a group of eminent missionary and Thai scholars, for critical evaluation. At the same time, copies of their manuscripts are sent out to all the members of the consultative committee, composed of leading national and missionary leaders of different denominational backgrounds, who are able to give qualified comments and to make the necessary suggestions. The Thai Bible Revision Committee hopes to complete the preparation of the manuscript of the revised text by 1960.

World-wide Bible Reading and Universal Bible Sunday are observed by the majority of the churches and missions in Thailand. The Secretary has been invited to preach in services of various language groups. An offering for the Bible Society is taken on Bible Sunday by most of the churches. There is a marked increase in their giving to the Bible Society—an increase of 101% over last year.

United States of America

Charles W. Baas, the Assistant Treasurer of the *American Bible Society*, comments as follows on the A.B.S. Budget for 1957, in the February issue of the Society's "Record" :

Expressed in terms of dollars, the trail that traces a gift made to the American Bible Society into volumes of Scriptures in users' hands is called the budget. The "act of faith" is the acceptance of the 1957 budget by the Advisory Council and the Society's Board of Managers, providing for the largest anticipated annual expenditure in the 141-year history of the Society.

Budget approval has been granted in spite of a pronounced deficiency of income in the past two years. In the early 1950's the Bible Society experienced several years when income and expenditures in each year were relatively close—a pattern which was drastically changed in 1955. According to the public accountant's report for 1955, the budget revealed an excess of expense over income of $33,669 ; and in addition, funds totaling $135,980 were used for projects that appeared as "needs above the proposed budget". In all, a total of $169,649 was spent above budget income receipts in 1955, requiring the use of funds previously invested. An estimate of results for 1956 indicates an even greater excess of expenditure than was reported for 1955. There is a good possibility that expenditures for 1956 may exceed budget income by $200,000. If this estimate is reasonably accurate, the Bible Society will in two years have spent between $350,000 and $400,000 more than it received in income under the budget.

A few illustrations will show how the Bible Society has been forced into this situation. One major cause of over expenditure is the programme

of Scripture distribution to the Armed Forces, for which the Society spent $220,681.28 in 1955. This was $70,681 in excess of the amount budgeted. During the ten and a half months ended November 15, 1956, chaplains who requested 67,648 whole Bibles in large orders received only 25,392 Bibles under a curtailed programme. Even with the drastic curtailment of programme in 1956, it is apparent that there will be an over-expenditure of at least $30,000 for the year.

Inflation on a world-wide scale is another cause of over-expenditure. Evidence of this loss of purchasing power is found in countries all over the world, but a glance at the two South American countries of Argentina and Brazil will serve to illustrate this problem. In Argentina the cost-of-living index was reported in 1948 as 180 per cent of the base period ; by 1955 the index had risen to 682 per cent. reflecting an almost fourfold price increase. Yet the Society must meet the need in a country where the local churches are enlisting 100,000 volunteers to present the Scriptures to the people. Cost-of-living indexes available for Brazil show that prices have more than tripled during the most recent 8-year period. Yet millions of additional Portuguese Scriptures are needed for distribution in the country of greatest immediate evangelistic opportunity.

The 1957 budget still does not meet the total world needs for Scriptures. Funds do not appear to be available to supply additional Scriptures for our service-men ($70,000) ; to provide additional translations and revisions ($60,000) ; to reflect our growing programme in visual materials and promotion of Bible use ($60,000) ; to meet unbudgeted distribution opportunities at home and abroad($179,000). These additional unbudgeted needs for 1957 total $369,000.

The total A.B.S. budget for 1957 amounts to $3,160,000, of which $808,000 will be used towards the cost of distribution in the U.S.A. and $1,050,000 for distribution abroad. In addition to the general budget $1,150,000, it is estimated, will be received and expended for Scriptures sold in the U.S.A.

*

According to a report by the National Reform Association, a large majority of public school superintendents and principles look with favour on the Pennsylvania law which requires that "at least 10 verses from the Holy Bible shall be read or caused to be read without comment at the beginning of each public school or each school day by the teacher in charge . . . . " The law has been in force without change since 1913. Of 233 replies by schoolmen to a questionnaire, 85% report the practice to have "great value" or "some definite value". Others consider it "too routine" or "a formality". No serious opposition is indicated. About half the reading is done by teachers, half by student volunteers. Some schools use public address systems. In 70% the Lord's Prayer is also repeated.

*

At the Advisory Council of the American Bible Society, which met on 27th and 28th November last, there were present 102 members and guests from 50 denominations. These figures include 73 official delegates and 29 guests. The breakdown of the guests figure of 29 was as follows : 18 women representing 14 women's church organisations of 10 denominations, and 11 guests from various other organisations. Of the 102 present, there were 42 who had never been there before.

This year for the first time, the Council divided itself into "sharing groups" in order to give each delegate an opportunity to contribute to the discussion.

United Bible Societies

The following information has been prepared on behalf of the U.B.S. by Miss M. Hills, Librarian of the American Bible Society :—

As at the end of December 1956 :

Languages in which the whole Bible has been published ..	210
Languages in which a complete Testament has been published	270
Languages in which at least a Gospel or other whole book has been published	629
TOTAL languages in which some part of the Bible has been published	1,109

The complete Bible has now been published in Bemba (Northern Rhodesia, B.F.B.S. and N.B.S.S.), Nimbi Ijo (Nigeria, B.F.B.S.) and Marovo (Solomon Islands, B.F.B.S.).

The whole New Testament has been published for the first time in Aranda (Australia, B.F.B.S.), Kuskokwim Eskimo (Alaska, A.B.S.), Manus Island (Admiralty Islands, New Guinea, B.F.B.S.), Mende (Sierra Leone, B.F.B.S.), Nantcheri (French West Africa, B.F.B.S.), Navaho (U.S.A., A.B.S.), Suau (Daui) (New Guinea, B.F.B.S.), Congo Swahili (Belgium Congo, B.F.B.S.), and Tzeltal (Mexico, A.B.S.).

Scriptures were published for the first time in :

Anuak	Sudan & Ethiopia	Matthew, John Romans	ABS	1956
Chru	Vietnam	Mark	BFBS	1955
N. Mauring Frisian	Schleswig, Germany	Mark	private	1954
Pennsylvania German	Penn., U.S.A.	Matthew	private	1955
Goulei	French Equatorial Africa	John	BFBS	1956
Kimbala	Belgian Congo	John	Mission	1931
Koho	South Vietnam	Mark, John	BFBS	1956
Melpa	New Guinea	Luke	BFBS	1956
White Miao	Siam	1 John, Mark	OMF*	1955-56
Neo-Melanesian	New Guinea	Mark	BFBS	1956
Orokaivo	New Guinea	Mark	BFBS	1956
Putu	Liberia	Mark	ABS	1956
Remi	Tanganyika	Mark	BFBS	1956
Sediq	Formosa	Mark	ABS, BFBS, NBSS	1956
Suki	New Guinea	Mark, John	BFBS	1956
Congo Swahili	Belgian Congo	New Testament	BFBS	1955
Miahuatlan Zatopec	Mexico	Mark	ABS	1956

There are some 80 or more languages, many of them previously listed, in which short passages or collections of passages have been published, but in which no complete book of the Bible has appeared.

* Overseas Missionary Fellowship.

The next meeting of the United Bible Societies' Council is to take place in Brazil, from July 10—23 of this year. The delegates will first meet in Sao Paulo for five days, devoting most of their time to a general review of Bible Society affairs in the world ; they will then move to Rio de Janeiro for the second part of their meetings ; during that time matters of policy and administration will be examined and some joint sessions will be held with the Triennial Assembly of the Brazilian Bible Society.

The U.B.S. President, the Rt. Rev. Bishop E. Berggrav, formerly Bishop of Oslo, and two of the Vice-Presidents, the Rt. Rev. I. Salomies, Archbishop of Finland and the Rt. Rev. D. Coggan, Bishop of Bradford, will be present.

The U.B.S. meetings will be preceded by an all Latin American Conference of A.B.S. and B.F.B.S. secretaries in that area, and followed by a national Conference in Buenos Aires at which a few Bible Society leaders from abroad have been invited to meet delegates from the Advisory Council in Buenos Aires and representatives from the various Argentinian auxiliary committees.

Miscellaneous

House Bible Circles in Germany

Shortly after the war a movement started in Bavaria for the purpose of re-starting group Bible study in the churches, under the name of "Arbeitsgemeinschaft für Hausbibelkreise". This movement issues a monthly sheet to help the leaders and members of the Bible study groups. Four or five questions on each passage chosen (two passages each month) are suggested for the consideration of the groups. Brief answers are outlined, in order to help the leader in conducting the discussion. The number of these sheets now being produced each month is over 20,000 copies. Consecutive texts are generally chosen. For instance, St. John's Gospel was covered in 49 lessons.

Dr. G. Siegel, the initiator and leader of the movement, comments as follows in a booklet recently re-published, on the aims of his organisation :

"Many men who returned from prisoner and internee camps with strong religious experience, have, after their return to their home parish, long since been lost to the Church. . . . Many of them—and probably not the worst—have gone into radical communities and sects, others suffer a spiritual death in the isolation in which they find themselves, as a result of a lack of understanding and love in their home parish. They have looked for something among us which they have not found.

"The strong growth of the sects should, in particular, make us pause for thought. It no doubt has its basis not only in the events of the post-war period, but faces us seriously with the question whether there is not something quite essential lacking in our church life, which these people are seeking and do not find within the Church. We are convinced that these men and women

are seeking not so much a different doctrine and are therefore finishing up in the sects. It is our opinion that they are seeking community—community in the smallest groups, under the Word of God; where they can express themselves freely and naturally, and where they will get help from the Gospel as it relates to the many questions and needs of everyday life. And where they find this community they even swallow the peculiarities of the doctrine.

"Finally it should be pointed out that the need of the refugees in West Germany is in part so great, that there is a danger that these very valuable people, many of whom have in part stood up to the test in the East through their pioneering spirit, will remain uprooted people, that is to say, because of their material and spiritual need, they lapse into nihilism and a state of mass living. They add to the constantly-growing army of those on the fringe of the Church. But that means that they can scarcely be reached by the Gospel, because their individuality has been lost . . . .

"The house community, which the Book of Acts is never tired of emphasizing, is hardly existent now in our parishes. Yet in saying this we must not forget that the spreading of the Gospel in a pagan world—and are we not living in such ?—is to a very real extent carried out in this way . . . .

"For a church which, by its very nature, must always be missionary, it is its unavoidable responsibility to bring to the Scriptures above all those groups of people who are most endangered—namely, the refugees and the "fringe members" of the Church, as well as to those estranged from the Church—so that they may find a new orientation and brotherly help in their situation. It is, however, an irrefutable fact that it is just these circles—with the possible exception of the refugees—who are tired of, or sceptical of, if not actually hostile to the proclamation of the Word through preaching, Bible study and evangelisation carried out through the official channels. This weariness, sceptical attitude or hostility goes, in an interesting way, hand in hand with a certain readiness to listen to Christ the living Word. But it must not come from the mouth of the pastor. The events of recent years have disturbed and destroyed too much in the life of these people for this to be acceptable. The movement for "House Churches"—in all modesty one may call them this—is relevant here. The experiences which are made with such House Churches—in Württemberg or Bavaria, Baden, Braunschweig, Westfalia or Hesse and other church centres—give justifiable hope that a true and necessary step has been taken, from the biblical point of view as well as from that of the law of obedient love.

"It is essential that these 'House Churches', which meet together among neighbours, should not be led by one of the outstanding church personalities. In the long run such a personality stifles the general discussion with his authority and the weight of his knowledge, and does not allow the individual participant to open out, while on the other hand at times the visit and presence of a pastor is so desirable and advisable. It is an indication of the religious seeking of our day that people will not have the finished product or the experience of a superior, as long as they are not already Christian."

However, Dr. Siegel stresses in his conclusion the importance for such Bible study groups of being closely related to the general life and activities of the Church, so that they do not become self-centred ecclesiolae in ecclesia.

Significance of Papyrus Bodmer II

The papyrus Bodmer II, which contains the oldest known manuscript of the first fourteen chapters of the Gospel of St. John, has now been published by the Bodmer Library in Geneva. The editor, Professor Victor Martin of the University of Geneva, says in his introduction that the experts who have studied the reproductions of this codex are agreed that according to the paleographical evidence this manuscript was written at the beginning of the third century or possibly about 200 A.D. Thus this papyrus is probably a full century older than the other manuscripts which give the full text of St. John (i.e. the Vaticanus and the Sinaiticus).

This important new text will now have to be studied by the specialists in textual criticism. The general impression which the manuscript makes is that it differs from the known manuscripts at many points in matters of ordering of the words or of style, but that there are few or no variations of substance.

Parts of the manuscript of other chapters have been found and will also be published by the Bodmer Library.

Commenting on this manuscript, Professor K. Aland of Halle writes :

"In 1516 Erasmus published in Rotterdam the first printed edition of the Greek New Testament. After this edition, Luther prepared his translation into German in Wartburg, for the New Testament of Erasmus was one of the few books which the reformer had with him then. Erasmus did not feel the need of more than four Greek manuscripts for his undertaking. Nevertheless he knew that there were more, but these four were sufficient for him. Only slowly did the number of known manuscripts, used by scholars, increase in the following period. It was the work of the 19th century that first brought about definite progress. It is to two Germans, more than any others, that we are indebted : Konstantin von Tischendorf and Gaspar René Gregory. Gregory, an American by birth but later living in Germany, was the first who brought together, through countless journeys and a widespread correspondence, a general view of the manuscripts of the Greek New Testament which existed in the world. In 1908 they numbered 4,026 ; today we know altogether of 4,678 manuscripts.

"That is a very large number. And therefore the appearance of every new manuscript brings with it today excitement and joy, but if this occurrence takes place on an average every ten days, as has been the case in recent years, the excitement will not be so great. Of course, sometimes the expectations are not only fulfilled, but even surpassed : and this has just happened. The papyrus in question, the Bodmer II—which is its library name ; in the official list it appears as Papyrus 66— was written around the year 200. This means then that we have before us in it the third oldest MS of the New Testament that we possess. The oldest is a fragment from the 18th chapter of John, written about the year 125 ; then there are, from the end of the 2nd century, fragments of a page with verses, from the 16th chapter of Matthew. In both cases they are fragments with few readable lines, whereas the new papyrus contains not less than the first 14 chapters of John. Thus it represents the oldest larger manuscript of the New Testament that we have so far.

"And what is the significance of this for the text of St. John's Gospel and for the New Testament generally speaking ? The oldest complete manuscripts of the New Testament on parchment begin with the fourth century. Are they now superseded by the new discoveries ? Must we basically change the text which has

been circulated until now? By no means! Like the discoveries of the third century and the few fragments from the second century, our new papyrus underlines once more, that the transmission of the text has been faithful. This is the significance of the discovery; it does not bring anything revolutionarily new. The textual variations which it contains are already known to us from other manuscripts; insofar as they are new to us, they have only a limited significance. In no case do they lead to any alterations in the New Testament which would affect its interpretation. The handing down of the new Testament in manuscript form has proceeded in an extraordinarily conscientious way, in spite of the multiplicity of the copies. All other contemporary texts, poetical or scientific, have come to us not only through many less copies, but in much worse and less faithful readings".

Audio-Visual Aid Notes

AVA Workshop, 1957

The World Council of Christian Education and Sunday School Association (WCCESSA) has been invited to organise an International Audio-visual Workshop in England in 1957. This will be held at the Swanwick Conference Centre, near Derby, from June 16-21. It is being jointly sponsored by the World Council of Churches, World Committee of Christian Broadcasting, World Council of Christian Education, United Bible Societies and Inter-film. The International Missionary Council and RAVEMCCO will also play a part in the programme. The theme has been set as *Film in the Church—a conference on the practical use of visual methods by our churches*. The accent will be on the use of film and filmstrip.

Each day will begin with a general assembly, at which an address will be given by one of the leaders in the use of audio-visual media and mass communication techniques. The second half of each morning will be spent in groups; they will give consideration to theories underlying the presentation of the various media, in different circumstances and with different peoples and age ranges. An extensive library of audio-visual material will be available for private and group viewing each afternoon. Before the evening meal, practical demonstrations from many countries will be given. Following dinner, a presentation of the world's best films and filmstrips will be made in plenary session.

The London office of the WCCESSA is responsible for the organisation of the Workshop and plans are well advanced. Any Bible Society secretaries from other countries who expect to be in England at that time would be welcome at this conference, and early application is advisable.

Museum Techniques in Fundamental Education

The latest issue of *Educational Studies and Documents*, published by Unesco, is devoted to the problem of museum techniques in fundamental education.

Museum exhibition techniques have begun to change greatly during the

past quarter of a century. The emphasis to-day is more on the teaching value of museums, and the meaningless profusion of exhibits has been more and more reduced in number. Museums in many countries can no longer be regarded as sanctuaries for the connoisseur and specialist. "They are actively engaged in revising exhibition policies and relations with the public at large . . . . "

Several of these techniques more suited for instructive purposes can also be used in relation to fundamental education programmes without elaborate buildings or equipment. The Unesco publication refers to the use of exhibition techniques in relation to fundamental education of non-literate or semi-literate people, particularly in the field of the economic development of local cultural resources, the improvement of technology in agriculture and of health. Many of the experiences reported and remarks made in the document could easily be used in relation to exhibition techniques used by the Bible Societies. Here is a section of the part devoted to general considerations. It concerns the use of labels :

"There are two schools of thought about the use of the label. One states that the object should speak for itself and the viewer should not have someone else's ideas imposed upon him—a tendency in the art museums ; the other school thinks that the most important part of the exhibition is the labels and that the material on view only serves to illustrate the principles involved—a tendency in the science museums. Studies have been made of visitors' behaviour at museums exhibitions. It has been found that, even in literate societies, the majority of visitors do not bother to read the labels ; most of them simply saunter through or just look at the objects on view. However, an interested minority finds that short labels are insufficient for their needs and so ask the staff for more detail.

"A number of palliatives to this situation have been developed. One of the most common is the conducted tour, in which a member of the staff of trained volunteers takes groups around the museum or, if it is a single show case or exhibit, gives a short talk on it. Furthermore, questions may be put by the guide to the group in order to stress particular points, and questions which occur to the group may be answered in detail by the guide. Much has also been done to improve the quality of labels :

"(1) Attractive labels. On aesthetic grounds, a printed card may intrude upon an exhibition. However, rather than use none, attractive labels may be printed on special materials, or on cards or paper with a colour complementary to that of the background of the exhibit. In this way, they do not intrude upon the exhibit but become part of the visual effect and are also conveniently placed for the visitor desiring information.

"(2) 'Take away' labels have also proved to be successful. They are mimeographed sheets which discuss a particular exhibit. Interested visitors may help themselves to such sheets and take them home to study at leisure. An extension of this, for larger exhibitions, is the printed catalogue which is generally sold at a nominal sum to cover printing costs.

"(3) 'Gadget' labels. These are labels which require some action on the part of the visitor to function. They 'invite' the visitor to use them by stimulating his curiosity. At their simplest, they may involve turning a crank in order to see a new bit of information come into view. They may be semi-automatic, in which case a push-button device illuminates a

sequence of labels simultaneously with the appropriate part of the exhibit. Various projection devices, such as automatic slide projectors, may also be used."

The second part of the Unesco document describes an experiment in museum techniques made in Mysore. The theme of the exhibition was Trees and Soil. Various types of equipment were used : transparencies, photographs, charts, magnifying boxes, sectional working models (of a tree, showing the circulation of the sap), audio-visual model boxes, stereo viewers. The following remarks on the relative value of these various means of communication are based on the reactions of the public at the first presentation of the exhibition :

"Some five hundred villagers of all ages and both sexes—about 90% of whom were totally illiterate—swarmed through the exhibition during the day. Watching them, one was left with varied impressions.

"It seemed that the static and graphic elements—posters, photographs and drawings—were scarcely considered, with the exception of the illuminated transparencies.

"The working model of the tree was an object of mystified interest and admiration, but, even when the commentary was switched on, its message seemed too complicated to be fully grasped.

"The magnifying boxes were a great attraction, and many of the audience were obviously excited by their first experience of magnification. Whether they realised any connection between the beauty of the sprouting seeds, with their delicate roots and miniature leaves, and the general message of the exhibition is, however, extremely doubtful.

"The realism of the stereoscopic (3-D) colour photography also had a very potent appeal and the slides seemed to be studied with understanding as well as interest.

"Another object of remarkable interest was the album of 12 poster type pictures—in flash card form, which could be handled, turned over like a book and examined at leisure. Groups of villagers could be seen looking at this, while one of their number, often a small schoolboy, read aloud the captions written in large letters opposite each picture. Here, it seemed that the inclusion of very simple written material, even for a largely illiterate audience, was vindicated.

" There was no doubt, however, that the greatest impact was exerted by the audio-visual model boxes. As the manual suggested, the effect of automatic 'sound' was most impressive. A live demonstrator could never have commanded the wrapt attention that was given to the mysterious voice coming out of the box, nor could he have repeated at two-minute intervals the short, clear explanation that gave reality to what was before the viewer's eyes. When the sound was switched off, viewers would give only a cursory glance at the silent model. Then, as the sound came on, they would crowd back for a second view and each would remain with his eyes glued to the viewing window, listening intently to the soft voice that explained in his own dialect, simply and personally, what he was looking at. The trials of this audio-visual, three dimensional model box indicated that it may well be among the most effective audio-visual aids for fundamental education."

Exhibition : "The Needs of Man"

"Jesus Christ shows us God's self-identification with man in his physical and spiritual poverty ; so His concern with the outcast, the needy and the homeless to-day."

This is the theological basis of a new Exhibition being built by the British and Foreign Bible Society and the Inter-Church Aid & Refugee Service of the British Council of Churches for display in Westminster Central Hall, London from 2nd-16th May, 1957.

Entitled "THE NEEDS OF MAN" the Exhibition will seek to show God at work to-day through human agency satifying man's spiritual and physical hunger.

The entrance to the Exhibition will be a 30 foot high Cone focussing attention by exhibits, pictures and special lighting on the complex problems of the modern world—physical hunger, homelessness, warfare, noise, materialism, spiritual starvation. The next step will take the visitor into a similar Cone—but this time of brilliant light—where pictures will portray the Incarnation. God acted, decisively and dramatically, for man's redemption in the coming of Jesus Christ—"In Him was..... the light of men."

Then, visitors will be challenged to see the connection between the historic Incarnation and the needs of man in 1957 A.D., and taken to see glimpses of God's present work in the world through the Body of Christ—the Church.

On six stands the needs of different parts of the world such as East Africa, South America, India, Europe, the Middle and Far East will be vividly portrayed, together with evidence of what is being done to satisfy them. This will be done by means of photographs, descriptive text and exhibits provided by the two sponsoring bodies.

An information bureau will be furnished at the exit from the Exhibition with further details of the activities of the two sponsoring bodies.

In addition to the Exhibition proper, a varied programme is being arranged for the adjoining hall to include film showings, drama and national evenings. The Exhibition, to be opened by Mr. Lennox-Boyd, the Colonial Secretary, will be on view from noon to 9 p.m. daily (except Sundays). In the evening of the opening day a mass meeting will be held in the Great Hall, chaired by Sir John Wolfenden, Vice-Chancellor of Reading University, and addressed by the Rev. Dr. George MacLeod of the Iona Community, Scotland. On Thursday evening, May 9th a festival of music will be given in the Great Hall when the Alexandra Choir with orchestra and artists will render Part 1 of Haydn's "Creation" and Honegger's "King David".

The Exhibition will close on Thursday evening, May 16th with a Service of Dedication.

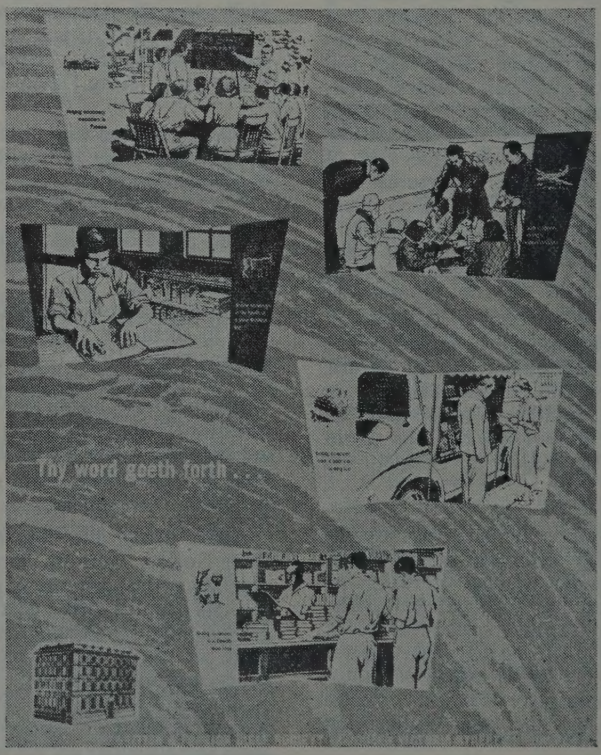
The Bible Societies have a proper concern not only to circulate the Scriptures but that the recipients should read and understand them and find in them the way of redemption for themselves and the world. Part of the purpose of this Exhibition is to challenge those normally outside the reach of Church and Bible Society to consider the relevance of the Bible to their personal needs.

Apart from showing aspects of Bible Society work in various lands together with specimens of Scriptures, the six stands will carry biblical quotations summarising the dominant need or problem of the territory concerned and indicating God's word of judgment and hope. Similarly an attempt is made to show the biblical basis and authority for the work of the Inter-Church Aid and Refugee Service of the Churches. The motive power of this relief work is not human pity but the constraining love of God as we find it in the Bible—"We love

because He first loved us". The souls and bodies of men must be fed because He is the Bread of life freely given to us.

Posters for teaching

The value and use of visual aids for educational purposes is now well known and hardly requires advocacy here. Pictorial presentation fixes the idea in the child's mind in a way that the printed or spoken word does not do of itself. What is often overlooked, however, is that in addition to the moving sound film—or even the film strip—still pictures, photographs, graphs and pictorial charts can be real aids to learning when used by the right person with the proper technique and adequate teaching material. By way of example, even in the use of film strips many teachers, in practice, show only three or four frames in a lesson to emphasize some particular points and a carefully designed poster may well serve the same purpose.



Reproduction of one of the three new B.F.B.S. posters described on this page

For some years the B.F.B.S. has been asked by Day and Sunday School teachers and students in Training Colleges for visual aids for lessons in Religious Knowledge. While the Society is precluded by its charter from helping with the interpretation of the Bible, it has produced exhibition material in small units. One, for example, shows "The Influence of the Bible on the British Way of Life" ; another consists of facsimile pages illustrating "The History of the English Bible".

Recently the Education and Youth Department of the B.F.B.S. has produced a set of three pictorial charts or posters as a small contribution towards meeting this general need for teaching aids. Each poster is attractively designed in colour and is accompanied by full teaching notes and suggestions for further reading. The drawings reproduced on the posters illustrate three aspects of the Bible Society's work—Scripture translation, production and circulation.

The first poster, entitled "every man in his own tongue", shows a missionary and a national translator working in collaboration, surrounded by specimen texts in various scripts and languages. Small sketches of the five great land masses of Asia, Africa, Australasia, Europe and the Americas show the approximate number of versions circulated in each. A line graph compares the slow rate of growth of translations in the earlier days of the Church with the vastly accelerated rate since the foundation of the Society in 1804.

The second poster focuses attention on some of the essential processes which put the work of translation into tangible and readable forms. Three pictures, placed with appropriate captions on the symbol of an open book, illustrate Bible paper-making, binding and packing. The fourth picture depicts the prepared Scriptures being loaded on board ship before beginning their journey to waiting multitudes in all parts of the earth. This poster, entitled "This work was wrought of God", makes the point that modern scientific methods are harnessed for sending God's Word out into His world and that, no less than the translator and missionary, skilled craftsmen are necessary for the completion of the task.

In the third poster (see page 94) —"Thy Word goeth forth"—attention is drawn to some of the methods of Scripture distribution and some of the actual recipients. In Panel One a missionary linguist is giving instruction to future translators. In the Second Panel colporteurs distribute illustrated Gospels amongst Korean refugees. A blind Burmese boy is reading from the Braille Scriptures in Panel Three and a passer-by is seen in the Fourth Panel, inspecting the books displayed on a Bible van in Belgium. In the last Panel two customers are shown at the counter of a bookshop in Uganda. In addition to the main themes each of the panels carries a marginal sketch of one of the many forms of Bible transport—ship, plane, pack-mule, motor van and native porter.

It is believed that these simple, colourful posters will be of real value to those Bible Society supporters who are eager to interest young people and children. The posters are available in two sizes—15 inches × 20 inches, 30 inches × 20 inches, at one shilling and sixpence and two shillings and sixpence respectively—inclusive of teaching notes and leaflets (and post free in the U.K.)

Personalia

At his own request, **Dr. Eric M. North** retired on December 31st, 1956, from his executive position as senior Secretary of the American Bible Society. Fortunately for all concerned this does not mean that he is leaving Bible Society work altogether, for he is remaining with the A.B.S. for the time being as Consultant.

This is not the moment to pay full tribute to Dr. North for all he has meant to the U.B.S. from the days when it was little more than a hope and an idea. His keen and scholarly mind, his literary ability, his administrative gifts and above all his Christ-centred life are known to all who have worked with him or come into contact with him. All these qualities have been put generously at the disposal of the U.B.S. from its earliest days. Our gratitude for his help in the past is not unmixed with some hope of its continuance still for some time to come !

The **Rev. Canon Chandu Ray** has left the Bible Society Agency in Pakistan and was consecrated on 27th January last as Assistant Bishop of Sind. His secretaryship has been taken over by **Mr. P. N. Joshua,** M.A., LL.B. Canon Chandu Ray made a unique contribution to Bible Society work and built up the West Pakistan auxiliary with vision and appreciation of the vital importance and urgency of the work, to the standard of effectiveness it now has. He has left the service of the Bible Society with the warm gratitude of all his colleagues and with our best wishes for his future.

Mr. P. N. Joshua retires from a high governmental office to come to the Bible Society. He has spent the best part of his career in judicial work, and has been closely connected with the life and administration of the Anglican Church in Pakistan, particularly as Registrar of the Lahore Diocese.

Contributors to this Issue

THE REV. DR. W. J. PLATT is one of the two General Secretaries of the British & Foreign Bible Society, responsible particularly for that Society's work in the Dominions of Canada, Australia, New Zealand and South Africa, in Burma and the Far East, and in some European countries.

THE REV. DR. LATON E. HOLMGREN is one of the General Secretaries of the American Bible Society, responsible particularly for that Society's work in Asia, Africa and the Pacific Islands.

THE REV. E. H. ROBERTSON is the Study Secretary of the U.B.S., working on a study sponsored by the U.B.S., the World Council of Churches and the International Missionary Council on The Place and Use of the Bible in the World.